

PLATO AND JESUS

**A Dissertation
presented to
the Faculty of the
Claremont School of Theology**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy**

**by
James R. Van Cleave**

May 2003

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

© 2003

James R. Van Cleave

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

This dissertation, written by

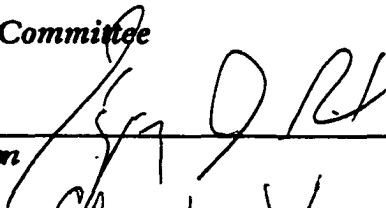
JAMES R. VAN CLEAVE

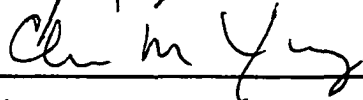
under the direction of HIS *Faculty Committee,*
and approved by its members, has been presented to and
accepted by the Faculty of the Claremont School of
Theology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of

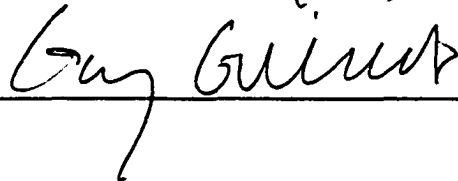
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Faculty Committee

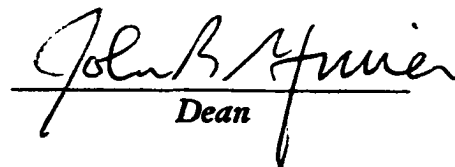
Chairperson







May 15, 2003
Date


Dean

ABSTRACT

PLATO AND JESUS

James R. Van Cleave

This thesis examines the theology of the New Testament Gospels, especially that inherent within the parables of Jesus, in light of the soul-based theology of Plato and his followers. It is shown that Jesus' Kingdom of God is not of the material world, but of the intelligible world as described by Plato and known to many Jewish philosophers. The Platonic theology in the Gospels had been earlier modified by Hellenistic Judaism in order to form the basis of Jewish apologetic literature. The soul-based aspects of Platonic thought influenced but did not totally determine the Kingdom of God gospel attributed to Jesus.

It is typical in New Testament scholarship to assign primacy to the Jewish sources, and to assume that the Kingdom of God is the expected world empire of the Jewish kingdom associated with the Salvation History of the Jews – that is, God will someday restore the promised Davidic kingdom lost prior to the exile. This literal understanding of the Jewish kingdom was not used by Jesus when he said that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Either Jesus was wrong about the presence of the Kingdom of God or his understanding was something different than the restoration of the Jewish empire. It is shown that Jesus' notion of the

Kingdom of God is consistent with Greek philosophy, and is not incompatible with an allegorical notion of Jewish salvation history.

The theology of Plato is reconstructed and followed through the Middle Platonic Jewish scholars in Alexandria; in particular, to Philo, and on to Hellenistic Jews in Galilee. The gospel as preached by Jesus can be interpreted using Platonic, as modified by Philonic, theology to understand the Kingdom of God. The interpretation of the New Testament Kingdom of God as being the kingdom of the lovers of wisdom, the philosophers, who emphasize the nourishment of individual human souls by the practice of virtue and the seeking of divine knowledge, is shown to be valid. An exegesis of the Kingdom parables using Hellenistic philosophical doctrine is included.

Acknowledgements

The research within this dissertation grew from several sources at the Claremont School of Theology. There are certain extraordinary persons, however, who need to be singled out for their help on this arduous effort. The earliest encouragement came from Professor Burton Mack, who convinced me that it was more than permissible to think creatively in regard to New Testament studies. He got me started down this road. A little later, Professor Gregory Riley taught me about the Greco-Roman background of the New Testament, along with other influences such as Zoroastrianism, and got me to commence reading the works of Plato.

What I needed was help from an expert in the Greek Classics who would be willing to advise a New Testament student. That is rarely done. By extraordinary luck, I discovered Professor Charles Young of our affiliated Claremont Graduate University, and was overjoyed that he agreed to help my project. In reviewing New Testament scholarship, I could not but notice that quite often comments concerning Plato's theology are terribly wrong, and so an early task was to reconstruct Plato's system in a way that made theological sense. Professor Young steered me through the minefield of potential mistakes that this endeavor encompassed, and I am extremely grateful.

The connection of Plato to Jesus clearly went through the area of Hellenistic Judaism. For expertise in that area, I was again fortunate to find Professor Gary Gilbert of Claremont McKenna College's Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, who soon asked such extremely blunt and grilling questions that, when the answers came, the path was straight and clear.

Meanwhile, I have had extraordinary support on the home front by my wonderful spouse of more than a few years, Emilie, to which I am joyously appreciative.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
1. The Nature of the Parables of Jesus	1
The Greco-Roman Contribution to the Gospel of Jesus	1
The Existence of Koine Theology Recognized by Origen	8
The Kingdom of God According to Plato	12
The Absence of a Kingdom of God in Traditional Judaism	15
The Kingdom of God in the New Testament	20
The Invisible Kingdom of God Within	22
A Summary of Jesus' Gospel of the Kingdom of God	32
The Absence of Apocalyptic Material in Jesus' Gospel	48
Hellenization in the Jewish World	53
The History of the Situation	55
Before the Crisis – Defense of the Old Wisdom	58
The Crisis	60
Battle Plan #1 – The Technique of Allegory	63
Battle Plan #2 – The Use of Platonic Thought as Defense	66
Battle Plan #3 – Greek Philosophy Stems from Judaism?	68
The Commencement of the Jewish Mission	71
The Education of Jesus	74
The Philosophy of the Pharisees	76
Jesus the Synagōgē Student	80

2. The Theology of Plato	86
Method and Motivation for this Effort	86
Plato's Theological Summary Statement	90
Plato's Divine World	91
Deity	91
Ideas or Forms	97
Mind	102
Logos	103
Proofs of the Existence of God	105
Argument by Analogy to Humans	106
Argument by Intelligent Design	108
Argument by Motion	109
Argument by Divine Order	110
Creation	111
World Soul	118
Individual Soul	122
Anthropology	123
The Body-Soul Problem	124
The Human Soul Seeks its Divine Kin	127
Proof of the Immortality of the Soul	127
Proof by Self-Moving Motion	128
Proof by Indestructibility of the Soul	129
Proof by Inadmission of Opposites to Life	131

Proof by Cycle of Opposites, Invisibility, and Recollection . . .	131
The Problem with Reincarnation	135
The Human Soul Made in the Image of God	137
Equality of All Souls	137
Absolute Measure of Virtue	138
Demons of the Soul	140
Sin	142
The Forgiveness of Sins	147
Salvation	148
The Need for a Savior	149
The Savior as Love Advisor	150
The Philosopher-Teacher as Savior	154
The Righteous Person on a Mission as Savior	155
The Kingdom of the Philosophers	160
The Growth of the Soul by Divine Knowledge	161
Eschatology	165
Afterlife and Reincarnation	165
The Communion of the Saints	170
Plato's Apocalyptic Myths	171
3. The Trajectory of Platonic Theology	174
From Plato to Philo	174
The Followers of Plato	176
The Old Academy	179

The Golden Chain	180
Plato the Pythagorean?	182
The Importance of the Neo-Pythagorean Movement	186
The Neo-Pythagorean Influence on Alexandrian Platonists	191
The Remarkable Philo of Alexandria	195
The Theology of Philo of Alexandria	198
Philo's Logos as Deity	205
Philo's Kingdom of God	210
Philo's Growth of the Soul by Nourishment	213
The Logos as Mediator between God and Man	219
The Logos as Bridegroom of the Human Soul	220
4. The Spread of the Apologetic Tradition	226
From Philo to Jesus	226
Pagan Anti-Semitism and the Jewish Response	226
Jewish Apologetic Literature	228
Additions to Esther	230
Eupolemus	232
Artapanus	233
Aristobulus	235
The Letter of Aristeas	238
The Wisdom of Solomon	241
Fourth Maccabees	246
Philo's Apologies	248

The Apologies of Josephus, especially Against Apion	256
The Mission of the Teachers	258
Galilee, the Crossroad of Culture?	261
5. The Parables of the Kingdom	267
The Message of Jesus	267
Exegesis of the Parables of the Kingdom of God	274
Parables of Repentance and Purification	275
Parables of Commitment and Turning of the Mind	286
Parables of the Growth of the Soul	307
Parables of Eternal Reward	321
Conclusion to the Exegesis of Jesus' Parables	332
Bibliography	335
Index A. Index of Modern Authors	357
Index B. Citations of Scripture and Ancient Texts	362

CHAPTER 1

THE NATURE OF THE PARABLES OF JESUS

The Greco-Roman Contribution to the Gospel of Jesus

The New Testament includes four Gospels attributed to each of four of Jesus' evangelists; they are the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Within each of these four written Gospels is mentioned the only gospel that Jesus himself reportedly preached in every *synagōgē* in Galilee, which is called herein, the gospel of the Kingdom of God.¹ Jesus' message has been summarized by Mark as follows: "The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God has come near (*ēngiken*); repent (*metanoēite*) and believe in the good news (*euangelio*)."² The question is: What was the content of the good news that Jesus was welcome to preach in the *synagōgēs*? The answer presented within this thesis is that the good news preached by Jesus was based on a theology that explained traditional Judaism by means of some of the tenets of Greek

¹ See Luke 4:43, 8:1, 9:2, 9:11, 9:60 for Jesus' statements about preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God. See Acts 1:3, 8:12, 19:8, 28:23, and 28:31 for preaching of the Kingdom of God by the apostles. For Jesus' preaching in the *synagōgēs*, see Matthew 9:18, 12:9, 13:54; Mark 1:21, 3:1, 6:2; Luke 4:16, 6:6; John 6:59. See Matthew 10:7 for Jesus' instruction to go out and preach about the Kingdom of Heaven.

The transliterated Greek word *synagōgē* is used throughout this thesis as a reminder that little is known about it other than it was a collection of people, and that the modern term synagogue is surely something different.

² Mark 1:15. Cf. Matt 3:2, 4:17, 10:7. The NRSV is used throughout for Bible quotations except where noted.

philosophy.

In this thesis, the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven will be treated as synonymous, consistent with the view of nearly all biblical scholars.³ The gospel of the Kingdom of God is certainly not equivalent to the four New Testament Gospels, but it is only by gleaning from them what was said of the Kingdom of God that any understanding can be reached. In the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the New Testament can be found exactly 99 references to the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven, which occur within 97 verses. This quantity, although more would be wonderful, is sufficient to allow considerable analysis of the term and a new hypothesis as to the theology involved.⁴ The argument of this hypothesis is that Jesus' theology of the Kingdom of God reflects that of the Hellenistic Jews, who in turn, understood and used the theology that is, at least in part, traceable to the writings of Plato.

The Kingdom of God to Jesus, it is argued herein, was that of the well-established Greco-Roman kingdom of philosophers. This kingdom, according to

³ For example, C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (rev. ed.; New York: Scribner's, 1961), 21.

⁴ The method of examining only the Kingdom of God sayings was used by Burton Mack in "The Kingdom Sayings in Mark," *Forum* 3 (1987): 3-47. Mack used narrow criteria for his analysis based on the premise that the original Jesus sayings would have reflected that of a non-apocalyptic Cynic sage and that the kingdom sayings themselves were the product of the early Jesus movement. Accordingly, Mack found all of the kingdom sayings in Mark to be inauthentic to the earliest tradition of Jesus. Mack's method was valid but his premises were too narrow. This thesis broadens the criteria to reflect Jesus' sayings as being that of a Hellenistic Jewish sage, not a Cynic sage. This does not invalidate Mack's notion of early mythmaking by the Jesus community because it might be compatible with the notion of the mythmaking of a Jesus figure who preached a well thought-out Platonic message of salvation by means of the practice of virtue.

Plato and his followers through Middle Platonism and Hellenistic Judaism, can only be entered by lovers of divine wisdom, the very definition of philosophers.⁵

Philo of Alexandria further explained the Kingship of God as being associated with the divine *Logos*, also known as the Reason of God, Mind of God, or Wisdom of God to the Hellenistic philosophers. Earlier, the *Letter of Aristeas* defined kingship to the Hellenistic Jews as having attained philosophic virtue:

(The King) agreed with him [his Jewish guest] and said to the next guest, "What is the definition of kingship?" The reply was, "Real self-mastery, not being carried away by wealth and glamour, nor having, as a result overweening or unworthy ambitions – (that would be kingship) if you reasoned well."⁶

The overall message of the *Letter of Aristeas* is that the Jewish philosopher –nearly every Jew qualifies – is fully capable of assuming kingship at any time. The philosopher is a king, operating through the power of God in a kingdom of divine knowledge, nurtured by the practice of virtue and expanded by the study of the writings of previous philosophers, whether of Plato, or Moses, or

⁵ For the philosopher as king see Plato, *Pol.* 259A-B; 292E-293A; *Phileb.* 28C; *Ep.* 2.312E. See Philo *Opif.* 69-71, 139, 145-6; *Leg.* 3.81, 115; *Sacr.* 8-10, 49; *Det.* 22-23; *Post.* 127-28; *Gig.* 60-61; *Deus* 143, 159-60; *Plant.* 58; *Migr.* 8-9, 146; *Congr.* 50, 116; *Fug.* 10, 100-01; *Mut.* 17; *Somn.* 2.45. See esp. "We pronounce wisdom to be kingship, for we pronounce the wise man to be a king," *Migr.* 197 (Colson & Whitaker, LCL), "Rather they perceived the kingship in his mind, and thus Moses confesses that the Sage alone is king," *Mut.* 152 (Colson & Whitaker, LCL); and "(W)hen he points to virtues he means thereby to declare that the Sage who possesses them is a king, a king appointed not by men but by nature, the infallible, the incorruptible, the only free elector. Thus was it said to Abraham by those who saw his worthiness: 'thou art a king from God with us,'" *Somn.* 2.243-44 (Colson & Whitaker, LCL). For God's divine Reason being King (*basilea logismon*), see Philo, *Prov.* 2.19.

⁶ *Letter of Aristeas* 211, in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, (trans. R. J. H. Shutt; 2 vols.; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983-1985), 2:26. Bracketed words mine.

best, of both. The philosopher's kingdom, in which he or she is a king, is the Kingdom of God.

The *Logos* was known to be both the means to acquire the divine wisdom, and the wisdom itself. That is, the Kingdom of God is the Mind of God – a Mind that is both the dynamic power to help the individual soul to learn and the eternal source of never-changing divine knowledge. The *Logos*, then, is both the transcendent, never-changing, divine Mind of God, *and* the flexible, adaptable, immanent power of God.⁷ The *Logos*, insofar as education is concerned, can be considered as the epitome of the divine teacher – a teacher that both influences the learning act by a pupil and acts as repository of the knowledge to be taught.⁸ The term *Logos* is both a verb denoting powerful divine action *and* a noun denoting the sum of all divine knowledge.

That the theology of Jesus has roots in Platonism should not be a shock to modern Christian scholars. Justin Martyr expressed his analysis of what Jesus said as follows:

And I confess that I both pray and with all my strength strive to be found a Christian; not because the teachings of Plato are different from those of Christ, but because they are not in every respect equal, as neither are those of the others, Stoics and poets, and historians. For each person spoke well, according to the part present in him of the divine logos, the Sower, whenever he saw what was related to him [as a person]. But they who contradict

⁷ The theology of the Mind of God according to Plato is discussed in Chapter 2; that of Philo is discussed in Chapter 3.

⁸ The *Logos*, as the Mind of God, is also the creator of all according to Plato and his followers.

themselves on the more important points appear not to have possessed the hidden understanding and the irrefutable knowledge. Therefore, whatever things were said rightly among all people are the property of us Christians. For next to God, we worship and love the logos who is from the unbegotten and ineffable God, since also He became man for our sakes, that, becoming a partaker of our sufferings, He might also bring us healing. For all the writers were able to see realities darkly, through the presence in them of an implanted seed of logos.⁹

In this passage of Justin's, the seed idea of this thesis has been sown. It will be shown that there are both equalities and differences between the words of Jesus and those of Plato. In doing this, some of the hidden understanding and irrefutable knowledge of the divine will come to view, perhaps not so darkly.

Another second century philosopher, Celsus, recognized that Jesus' gospel seemed to be dependent upon the philosophy of Plato, but was a corrupted version of it. Although Celsus' argument survives only in Origen's reply, John Granger Cook has postulated that the argument can be reconstructed and the applicable passages in Plato's works identified.¹⁰

⁹ Justin Martyr, *1 Apol.* 13, in *St. Justin Martyr: The First and Second Apologies* (trans. Leslie William Barnard; New York: Paulist Press, 1997), 83-84. Barnard explains that this is a difficult passage to understand because of the term *logos spermatikos*, and summarizes the scholarship associated with this passage. Regrettably, Barnard (196-200) discounts the valuable work of Ragnar Holte, "Logos Spermatikos: Christianity and Ancient Philosophy According to St. Justin's Apologies," *ST* 12 (1958): 109-68, where Holte correctly recognizes this term as used by Philo and, in different language, Plato, to be the *logos* as the sower of knowledge in the human soul.

¹⁰ It need not be agreed that Jesus had read Plato's works incorrectly, or was able to read them at all. See John Granger Cook, *The Interpretation of the New Testament in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000; repr., Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002), 7, 4., 81, 100. The applicable passages in Plato's works are *Leg.* 743B, *Phaedr.* 247C, *Crito* 49B-E, *Ep.* 2.312E and 7.344B, *Crat.* 390C, *Prot.* 312D, and *Resp.* 534D. See also Origen's *Cels.* 6.10. 6.16-17, and 7.58.

The interpretation of Christian theology along Platonic lines of thought is neither new nor heretical. After a solid start in the early centuries following Jesus, the appeal to Plato later was set aside as obsolete, as explained by Pope John Paul II:

In the end, all rationalist arguments follow the path indicated in the Book of Wisdom and the Letter to the Romans – passing from the visible world to the invisible Absolute. Aristotle and Plato follow this same path, but in a different manner. *The Christian tradition before Thomas Aquinas*, and therefore also Augustine, was tied to Plato, from whom it nonetheless rightfully wanted to distance itself. For Christians, the philosophical Absolute, considered as the First Being or Supreme Good, did not have great meaning. Why engage in philosophical speculations about God, they asked themselves, if the living God has spoken, not by the way of the Prophets but also through His own Son? *The theology of the fathers*, especially in the East, broke away more and more from Plato and from philosophers in general. Philosophy itself, in the Fathers, ends up in theology
¹¹

By considering that the theology inherent in the gospel of the Kingdom of God is derived from notions of Plato, and is intimately tied to God, the human soul, divine Wisdom, and the divine *Logos*, it becomes straightforward to arrive at a “new” interpretation of the parables of Jesus.¹² It will be found that the resultant view of Jesus based on Platonic thought is not, in most ways, radically different from the conventional Christian view that is based on justification using Old

¹¹ Pope John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (ed. Vittorio Messori; New York: Knopf, 1994), 28-29. Indeed, when the 3rd century fathers repositioned the Church's theological base from that of the Greek philosophers to that of the Jewish-Egyptians, now considered to be the teachers of Pythagoras, an apology was necessary. The overwhelming apologetic treatise that specifically addresses this shift was that of Eusebius' *Praeparatio evangelica*.

¹² It is new to the modern world, but must have been well known by the followers of Jesus and the early Church.

Testament verses and concepts. That is, this “new” interpretation should not appear as a strange and radical view, but should provide a great expansion to the conventional approach and an insight to its many hitherto unexplainable and mysterious areas.

Gregory Riley has explained the need to look critically at the several contributors to the formation of the New Testament, including that of the Greco-Roman influence.

Today the study of the Greco-Roman context of the New Testament is necessary to help us understand certain aspects of our texts or traditions that we find obscure. The study of the Jewish background and the Greco-Roman context is both defensible and safe – *defensible* because both subjects are clearly legitimate parts of the study of Christianity, and *safe* [original emphasis] because, as commonly used, the results of such study tend to support the traditional Christian interpretation of history.¹³

Theologians have for some time considered that the theology of the philosophers, especially Plato, and its resultant usage by the Hellenistic Jews, influenced the so-called wisdom books of the Old Testament and, as a minimum, the New Testament books of the Epistle to the Hebrews, 2 Corinthians, and the Gospel of John.¹⁴ Scholars have shown that the early Christians used Plato's works to construct a theology that was intended to fit the inherited Scripture.¹⁵

¹³ Gregory J. Riley, *The River of God: A New History of Christian Origins* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001), 5.

¹⁴ For example, see Frederick C. Grant, *Roman Hellenism and the New Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1962), 94.

¹⁵ “In the first and second centuries the philosophy with which the Christians had to come to terms, the philosophy taken for granted by ordinary educated folk, was in effect a blend of

The piece that is heretofore missing from current scholarship is a comparison of the theological teachings attributed to Jesus with the theology prevalent in Hellenistic Jewish philosophical circles in Jesus' time.

The Existence of *Koine* Theology Recognized by Origen

Origen of Alexandria, writing in the very early third century, was certain that the Kingdom of God is indeed equal to the invisible, divine wisdom that nourishes the human soul, a view that is fully consistent with Platonic thought in this area.¹⁶ Origen, the pupil of Clement and great writer and teacher of the early Church, was particularly challenged by the Greek philosopher Celsus. Celsus, writing against Christianity in a treatise entitled *Logos Alethes, or True Discourse*, argued vehemently against the validity and theology of the entire New Testament, and especially the Gospels. No copy of the *True Discourse* has survived; however, Origen's prolific reply, entitled *Against Celsus*, in many cases restates enough of Celsus' argument that his approaches can be seen. Of particular concern is Celsus' methodical placing of quotations from Plato side by side with those of the New Testament for the purpose of comparison, always with the conclusion that Plato had said it better than the authors of the New Testament, and that, furthermore, Jesus had himself read the works of Plato but

Stoicism and Platonism." Henry Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), 4

¹⁶ Origen, *Or.* 25.1, 27.1-6. See comments on these passages by Henry Chadwick and John Ernest Leonard Oulton, trans., *Alexandrian Christianity: Selected Translations of Clement and Origen with Introductions and Notes* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), 192-4, 218-20.

had made sloppy mistakes in its interpretation, perverting the words.¹⁷ Origen was indeed knowledgeable in Platonism. However, Celsus's use of Plato was itself very clever in that neither Origen nor any early Church theologian could seriously attack Plato's theology simply because it was vitally necessary to use it to defend much of Christianity. Origen's approach was not, in any direct way, to disparage Plato's philosophy, but rather to state that Plato and the authors of the Old Testament and New Testament were all ambassadors of the truth. The difference, says Origen, is that Plato's writings were highly polished and lofty, appealing only to literary people, while those of the New Testament were simple and practical, to appeal to the multitude.¹⁸ Origen grants that the doctrines found among the Greek philosophers are the same as those found in Scripture, but without the divine power that attracts the souls of humans to follow them. He says that Jesus and his disciples, although well traveled throughout many countries of the world, were nevertheless ignorant of Greek philosophy, and that Jesus had not studied literature, either that of the Greeks or Hebrews, as the Scriptures attest.¹⁹ His negative statements about Socrates and other philosophers center on the notion that although they were able correctly to figure out representations of the invisible things of God, the creation of the world, and

¹⁷ Origen, *Ce/s.* 6.1, 16.

¹⁸ *Ce/s.* 6.1-2. This argument was a popular one: it is not just what one knows, but what one does with the knowledge, that counts; the Greek philosophers were elitist and selfish with knowledge, but the Christians are generous with it.

¹⁹ *Ce/s.* 6.2, 16. Origen cites Matt 13:54, Mark 6:2, and John 7:15 here, of which only the latter is applicable.

the ascension to view the very face of God through reason alone, they nevertheless typically ended their lives as did Socrates, with the foolishness of offering of a cock as sacrifice to Aesculapius.²⁰

Origen's argument indirectly asserts that Jesus and his disciples, while not educated in Plato's doctrines, nevertheless knew the same divine knowledge of which Plato wrote. Origen thus acknowledges that Plato knew many things accurately concerning the divine, but that his declarations did not result in the practice of a pure worship of God. Origen says that some of the statements of Plato can be found in Old Testament Scripture, but that Scripture is older than the works of Plato, Homer, or even the Greek invention or writing. In fact, says Origen, Plato learned from certain Hebrews the words quoted by Celsus from the *Phaedrus*.²¹ Origen does not account for the fact that while a snippet of a verse of Scripture might say something comparable to a verse of Plato, the former is typically little more than an obscure verse, while the latter may be a major theme developed in an entire book. Origen freely quotes verses from Jewish wisdom books, such as the Hellenistic books of Qoheleth and Wisdom of Solomon, but also cites Exodus, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Hosea, Proverbs, and Psalms to defend his case that Plato had learned things from the Hebrews.

Origen thus admits to a *koine* theology of divine knowledge that was known to Plato, the Old Testament and New Testament authors, and, most

²⁰ *Cels.* 6.4. Origen uses *Phaed.* 118 here.

²¹ *Cels.* 6.19.

importantly, Jesus and his disciples. However, ever since Origen, New Testament scholars and theologians have seemed reluctant to consider that the *koine*²² Platonic and Stoic philosophy that was prevalent in Palestine throughout the immediate centuries before the time of Jesus can itself be connected to the teachings of Jesus. Frederick Grant has stated the problem well.

Later theological reactions against classical religious ideas, and even against the idea of human culture in general – as is conspicuously apparent in one very popular school of continental theology today – do not blot out the fact of the Church's debt to Greece and Rome, or the obvious historical continuity of Christianity as a whole with its own past, rooted in the ancient Hellenistic-Roman world. Theologians may ignore history and philosophy if they choose; they cannot destroy them. Many modern writers have pointed out our indebtedness to the Greeks in the realm of scientific and artistic ideas, for the concept of history, and other major ideas by which we live; but it should be pointed out that these ideas are also of significance for religion. The ideas of cosmological order, of law (both natural and human), of destiny, of moral standards governing men and nations – these classical ideas reinforce those set forth in the Bible and enshrined in the Jewish and Christian faiths. Other ideas, such as the cyclical idea of history and its endless repetitions, of human nature as limited, not depraved, of folly and stupidity as related to sin – and to sinfulness – of the future state as that of the soul's immortality, not the resurrection of the body – these ideas have been influential. The Christian religion has modified them; yet it has not denied or abolished them.²³

In Chapter 3 of this thesis, more will be said about the Hellenistic *koine* philosophy that came to be popular in Palestine in Jesus' time. What will be presented is the idea that there was a very active intellectual activity, probably

²² The term *koine* philosophy is used by Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought*, 5. See also Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:537, n12.

²³ Frederick Grant, *Roman Hellenism*, 30.

centered in Alexandria, for the purpose of educating Jewish apologists to go forth into Palestine and other Hellenized areas where Jews might live. These educated apologists were trained to lecture or preach on the merits of Jewish philosophy in comparison to, and in general agreement with, Platonic philosophy. These apologists used the *synagōgē* as a platform for communication. Their purpose was to preserve Judaism, and their main tool was the allegorical method of subtly placing Scripture, especially that of the Pentateuch, within Greek philosophical ideas. One key person who prepared the arguments and trained students to do this was the Jew, Philo of Alexandria.

The Kingdom of God According to Plato

The systematic theology inherent within Plato's works is addressed in the next chapter. However, in order to appreciate the overview of this thesis, it is first necessary to summarize what Plato's notion of God was. It is critical to realize that Plato divided and separated the entire universe into two distinct worlds. The first world to be discussed is that of the material world, consisting of matter that can be detected and experienced through any of the five human senses. This world contains various physical elements of material that although having beauty and being all good, nevertheless themselves are subject to decay, rust, rot, or death. The human body is a part of the material world. The material world is the world of perishable elements, a thoroughly perishable world that, although it was formed by God in the image of the eternal Ideas of God, is nevertheless

temporal, continually in a state of change.²⁴ For example, the earth will undergo major destruction and catastrophe from time to time.²⁵

The other world is the divine, immaterial world that is hidden and cannot ordinarily be seen or detected by any of the five human senses.²⁶ This is the intelligible world, knowable to humans only by means of reason, a process performed by the human mind and soul. The intelligible world is the divine world, the invisible kingdom of God, which includes the human mind, soul, spirit, reason, knowledge, and wisdom, all also themselves invisible. The intelligible world is not perishable or corruptible, but is eternal. Heaven is a part of the intelligible world, and is everlasting. This is God's world and that of the human soul, which is akin to God and formed from a divine nature that is not material, visible or temporal.

The divine world relates to the material world in several ways. First is that the material world was originally formed, or created, in the image of the divine Ideas, or, as the Middle Platonists were to conclude, God's eternal thoughts not subject to change. Very important among the Ideas is the Idea of Beauty – absolute Beauty that is infinitely beyond any beauty that a mortal can imagine. The second interrelation between the two worlds is that humans are formed with

²⁴ See Chapter 3 for a discussion of Plato's Ideas as interpreted by Middle Platonists.

²⁵ Plato, *Tim.* 22C, 37A.

²⁶ For the suitably enlightened, however, a glimpse of the divine can be obtained through the pursuit of beauty. The fully enlightened can occasionally gaze at divine Beauty, the absolute of the worldly beauty that humans should pursue. See Plato, *Phaedr.* 250D-251A.

a material body on the outside whereupon a divine soul from the intelligible world is placed inside. The soul is intended to control the body, but as can be observed, an evil person may have bodily desires that override the soul's ability to control it. Thirdly, the human soul originates in the divine realm and, unless the bodily appetites override it, it desires and strives to return to the divine realm. But in order to return, it must free itself from the weightiness of bodily desires and greatly grow. The only way for a divine soul to grow is to absorb as much of the divine realm as possible, the realm of the intelligible world that consists of divine wisdom, attainable by humans only through the process of reason. An enlightened person can grow his or her soul sufficiently to be able sometimes to see the Ideas, or the *face of God*. This entire divine world, which includes God, the human soul, human reason, and the divine knowledge that is the nurture of the soul, encompasses the Kingdom of God to Plato and his followers, the lovers of divine wisdom who are literally philosophers. To Plato and his followers, God possesses a kingly soul and a kingly mind that rules the universe under the power of a single divine, ordering intelligence.²⁷ This is the genuine Kingdom of God.

²⁷ Plato's notion of the philosopher as a king in the divine kingdom will be discussed in Chapter 2. For a preview, see Plato, *Phileb.* 30D and *Resp.* 560B-C. Philo's extensive notions of the philosopher as a king in the divine kingdom will be discussed in Chapter 3. Cf. Cicero, *Acad.* 2.136, which relates Antiochus of Ascalon's interpretation of Plato that says that only the sage is free and a king, while "all those not wise are foreigners and exiles and slaves and madmen" (Rackham, LCL).

The Absence of a Kingdom of God in Traditional Judaism

The above theology of the Kingdom of God is of Greek, not Jewish, origin. There is very little evidence of traditional Jewish thought about having a Kingdom of God as described in the New Testament. Most of the present day attempts at justification of a Jewish Kingdom of God stems back to the work of Gustaf Dalman in the very early twentieth century. Dalman was convinced that the equivalent Hebrew and Aramaic expressions for the Kingdom of God were the words *malkuth shamayim* and *malkutha dishmaya* that show up in a smattering of secondary Jewish literature. These words connote “kingly rule,” or perhaps “kingly power” rather than kingdom, forming an expression that shows the sovereignty of God, not the territory ruled.²⁸ These words do not appear in the Hebrew Bible.²⁹ The only places in Jewish literature that these words appear in relation to Old Testament passages are in the *Targum Onqelos* at *Exodus* 15:18, which reads: “God . . . his kingly sovereignty endures forever and ever” and a phrase in *Siphre Deut.* 113: “Before our father Abraham came into the world, God was, as it were, only the king of Heaven: but when Abraham came, he made him King over heaven and earth.” Dalman cites apocryphal texts such as the

²⁸ Gustaf Dalman, *The Words of Jesus* (trans. David M. Kay; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1909), 91-147. See also Norman Perrin, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 22-28, for the discussion concerning Dalman's contribution to the interpretation of the Kingdom of God. Dalman's work has been updated by Geza Vermes, *The Religion of Jesus the Jew* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 124-35.

²⁹ George R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 17.

Sibylline Oracles 3.47-48, "the mightiest kingdom of the immortal king shall appear over men;" *Sibylline Oracles* 3.767, "He will raise up his kingdom for all ages over men;" *Psalms of Solomon* 17:3, "The might of our God is for ever (upon us) with mercy, and the sovereignty of our God is upon the peoples for ever in judgment," and, finally the *Assumption of Moses* 10:1, "His kingdom will appear throughout his whole creation."³⁰ To Dalman's list can be added a verse in the Hellenistic *Wisdom of Solomon*: "she showed him the Kingdom of God."³¹ Two points must be made here. The first is that every text cited by Gustaf Dalman and, more recently, Mark Saucy was written quite late in the Hellenistic period and was undoubtedly influenced, positively or negatively, by the aforementioned *koine* Platonic theology. The second point is that all of these text verses quoted refer to the eternal nature of the transcendent God, a nature that is fully consistent with Plato's theology.

³⁰ Dalman, *Words*, 96-100. *T. Moses* 10:1, J. Priest, trans., "Testament of Moses: A New Translation and Introduction," in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 1:931.

³¹ Wis 10:10, "*basileian theou*." David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 43; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1979), 217, notes that others tend to view the Kingdom of God as "the heavenly Jerusalem which will one day descend to earth when the kingdom of God is established." This notion is considered to be far-fetched insofar as the arguments of this thesis are concerned.

Cf. Wis 6:4, where kings of earthly kingdoms are servants of the Kingdom of God. See also Mark Saucy, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus: In 20th Century Theology* (Dallas: Word, 1997), 83, who has added references to *T. 12 Patr.* (*T. Benj.*) 9:1, wherein the kingdom of the Lord is denied to the lusty, and *T. Ab.* 8:3, about the immortal kingship of heavenly God.

Despite the absence of direct references to the Kingdom of God, the notion of God as Lord and King of Israel occurs throughout the Old Testament.³² Accordingly, attempts have been made to consider that any mention in the Old Testament of the hope of the reconstruction of the destroyed kingdom of Israel, with or without an anointed human king (Messiah) in place, is a foretelling of the coming New Testament Kingdom of God as described by Jesus.³³ For example, the book of Daniel, a Hellenistic text likely written around 165 B.C., contains seven verses that use both the words "kingdom" and "heaven," all referring to God's sovereignty over a kingdom of men, *under* heaven. This refers not to a Kingdom of God, but a kingdom of worldly mortals under God. Apocalyptic proponents have long fought the interpretation of the Kingdom of God as being invisible and other-worldly, even though it was clearly described this way by Jesus. Perhaps the most forceful attempt to claim the Kingdom of God as being equivalent to the Old Testament "day of the Lord" was made by Albert Schweitzer, who said that if Jesus had meant a spiritual Kingdom, then he would have said so:

³² For example, see Pss 93:1; 100:3; 1 Chron 28:5.

³³ This theme is that of "Jewish history of salvation;" that is, "God called Abraham and his descendants, gave them the law through Moses, established Israel as a kingdom in the time of Saul and David, and punished Israel for disobedience by exile; he will some day raise his people again, if need be defeating their oppressors in war; many Gentiles will turn to worship him," in E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London: Penguin, 1993), 80. Hellenistic Judaism, however, denied that God punished the Jews in this way, saying that sin brings its own punishment and God reserves reward or punishment until after death of the individual, according to Philo, *Decal.*, 177.

The fact that in the two oldest gospels Jesus does not put forward any doctrine of the Kingdom of God and his Messiahship seemed to reinforce this apparently self-evident view. This silence of his appeared to justify the acceptance of a spiritual view of the Kingdom, corresponding to his ethics, as belonging to his outlook. In reality, however, this was an error. If Jesus had wished to replace the view of the Kingdom and the Messiah current among his hearers with a different one, he would have had to give clear expression to his views, and in doing so would have provided the scribes and Pharisees with plenty of material for controversy.³⁴

G. R. Beasley-Murray has noted three common features of the prophetic teachings about the hoped-for messianic kingdom: (1) Yahweh will rule not just Israel but all nations, (2) the people will be cleansed and renewed in righteousness, and (3) the kingdom will be entirely peaceful, with a luxuriant fruitfulness of nature and no war.³⁵ Clearly, this Old Testament idea of kingdom is earthly, visible, and external to the human soul. It does not fit well with the idea of the Kingdom of God found in the synoptic Gospels, but it is certainly not its antithesis, either. Jesus' idea of the Kingdom of God is structured on Greek philosophical and metaphysical concepts, with the Old Testament idea of messianic kingship over Israel a secondary factor; that is, the notion of the Kingdom of God is a synthesis of Greek and Jewish thought with the former being primary and the latter being window-dressing.

³⁴ Pace Albert Schweitzer, *The Kingdom of God and Primitive Christianity* (trans. L. A. Garrard; New York: Seabury, 1968), 90, the argument from silence does not hold in consideration of overwhelming evidence within the Gospels of an invisible kingdom not of this world. Clearly, Jesus' preaching presented the Pharisees with plenty of material for controversy.

³⁵ Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom*, 20.

Jesus' Kingdom of God was an allegorization of the notion of a restored physical kingdom of Israel, a bigger and better kingdom that could never be taken away by invaders. It is futile to look for a worldly kingdom in Jesus' sayings. Jesus taught in parables, non-literal metaphors that often approach full-blown allegory. Traditional scholarship on the Kingdom of God finds itself in the difficult position of claiming that although Jesus taught using non-literal metaphor and allegory, he was nevertheless literal when he discussed the Kingdom of God. Jesus, however, described a kingdom not of this world, and not of literal Jewish expectation, but rather of the philosopher's ideal, the kingdom of divine wisdom, the *Logos*.

It might be fair to say that although the people of Israel had hopes for a messianic king to rule Israel and the nations, what Jesus offered them to become part of was a kingship of a different sort based on Greek philosophical wisdom of the divine. *Pace* Dalman and Perrin, it can be safely concluded that the Kingdom of God preached by Jesus was driven by a Greek concept, but it was not necessarily inconsistent with the traditional Jewish background. That is, the two could be reconciled by Hellenistic Jews by treating the return of the traditional kingdom of David and Solomon and their descendants as *allegory* of a kingdom of philosophers, as did Philo.³⁶

³⁶ Michael Lattke, "On the Jewish Background of the Synoptic Concept 'The Kingdom of God,'" in *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus*, (ed. Bruce Chilton; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 75, notes that the Jewish concept of the "royal rule of God" might be claimed to be as early as the time of Ezra in the 4th century B.C., "but it must be stressed that our texts

The Kingdom of God in the New Testament

The Kingdom of God is one of the most researched areas in the New Testament, as testified by hundreds of books written within the past 150 years. Fortunately, there are two excellent surveys of the field. The first is by Gösta Lundström, which covers the history of interpretation from the late nineteenth century until about 1962, from the works of Albrecht Ritschl up to Rudolf Schnackenburg, with emphasis on German scholarship.³⁷ The second is by Mark Saucy, who focuses on the work of Norman Perrin and modern authors up through 1997.³⁸

The questions addressed by these two authors represent huge areas of research. Is the Kingdom of God eschatological/apocalyptic (Schweitzer & Barth) or non-eschatological (Harnack)?³⁹ Is the Kingdom of God in direct opposition to the Kingdom of Satan (Johannes Weiss), or not?⁴⁰ Is the Kingdom of God in the present (Cadoux, Manson, Dodd) or the future (Schweitzer, Goguel)?⁴¹ Is the Kingdom of God an existential decision-making process (Bultmann, Perrin) or

barely go back any further than the second century B.C." That is, the Jewish concept of the Kingdom of God, weak as it is, came about during the Hellenistic period.

³⁷ Gösta Lundström, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus: A History of Interpretation from the Last Decades of the Nineteenth Century to the Present Day* (trans. John Bulman; Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1963).

³⁸ Saucy, *Kingdom of God*.

³⁹ Lundström, *Kingdom*, 10-12, 69-75, 81, 141-45.

⁴⁰ Lundström, *Kingdom*, 35-44.

⁴¹ Lundström, *Kingdom*, 104-21.

not?⁴² Does the coming of the Kingdom of God mean a world catastrophe or the end of the world (Schweitzer) or was Jesus simply wrong to think so (Dibelius)?⁴³ If it is in the future, does the Kingdom of God come in linear time (Cullmann) or is it eternal and outside of time (Dibelius)?⁴⁴ Is the Kingdom of God tied to the coming of the Messiah (Jülicher) or not (Conzelmann)?⁴⁵

Perhaps the Kingdom of God, as used by Jesus, was not a conception of a kingdom but a symbol (Perrin, Scott) which was intended to evoke whatever the hearer wanted to hear.⁴⁶ Or perhaps the Kingdom of God was a community begun by a Cynic Jesus and represented the inside-outside of the social formation of early Christianity (Mack).⁴⁷ Alternately, maybe the Kingdom of God was a mystical experience, a communion with God (Borg).⁴⁸ Or maybe the Kingdom of God represented the realm of a Cynic, peasant, magician who refused to be the broker between humankind and God (Crossan).⁴⁹

There are many other suggestions as to what Jesus meant by the Kingdom of God. There is, however, one overwhelming conclusion to be reached

⁴² Lundström, *Kingdom*, 149-62. Saucy, *Kingdom of God*, 74-75.

⁴³ Lundström, *Kingdom*, 69-71, 163-69.

⁴⁴ Lundström, *Kingdom*, 163-70, 221-25.

⁴⁵ Lundström, *Kingdom*, 67-68, 244-45.

⁴⁶ Saucy, *Kingdom of God*, 77-85, 85-88.

⁴⁷ Saucy, *Kingdom of God*, 133-36.

⁴⁸ Saucy, *Kingdom of God*, 142-48.

⁴⁹ Saucy, *Kingdom of God*, 148-54.

in research of the hundreds of books involved: almost none even mention the philosopher-king of Plato, Middle Platonism, and Philo. Authors that do mention Platonism introduce it only to dismiss it quickly with prejudice. The overwhelming consensus is that the Kingdom of God is a Jewish concept, despite the incredibly weak evidence to support this basis. Two of the very few exceptions to this trend are in the works of Burton Mack and John Dominick Crossan, who argue for a Hellenistic Jesus and recognize the Platonic and Philonic background to the Kingdom of God but immediately leave the Platonic tradition well behind on the way to the conclusion that Jesus was most like a Cynic sage.⁵⁰ Jesus as a Cynical sage is primarily based on the language of his speech, that of the *chreia*. Nothing is known, however, of any systematic theology of the Cynics, if they had one. Cynic theology cannot be compared to that of Jesus; Platonic theology, however, can.

The Invisible Kingdom of God Within

This section briefly summarizes the context of the aforementioned 99 New Testament verses that specifically address the Kingdom of God. The aggregate of these verses indicates a theology that is systematic and meaningful within the implied system. Virtually no verses that specifically address the Kingdom of God

⁵⁰ Mack, "Kingdom Sayings," 12-13, noted that "Everyone knew the Stoic *apophthegm* ("saying") that the sage was the only true king," and that Philo said that "The sage alone is a ruler (*archon*) and king (*basileus*), and virtue (*aretē*) a rule (*archē*) and a kingship (*basileia*) whose authority is final" (*Somn.* 2.243-44). See *Abr.* 261; *Mut.* 152; *Spec.* 1.57. See also John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 287-92.

need be removed, restructured, or in any way modified. This is the inverse of the complaints by other scholars that the New Testament verses have been corrupted; invariably these scholars are quick to offer emendations that better suit their exegesis. Emendation is not necessary for the 99 verses under consideration. It is not denied that many New Testament verses may have been emended, but the Kingdom of God verses that are attributed to Jesus do not appear to have suffered any alteration that would erode their meaning. The situation is as if the disciples and followers of Jesus were open to change some things that Jesus reportedly said, but left fairly intact anything pertaining to Jesus' personal gospel concerning the Kingdom of God. It is possible that the authors of the New Testament Gospels never fully understood the theology involved with Jesus' notion of the Kingdom of God and chose not to risk its ruin by making changes.

In consideration of the above summary of Plato's theology concerning the deity, when Jesus said, according to Luke, that "My kingdom is not of this world,"⁵¹ or that "The Kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed,"⁵² it should be immediately obvious that the Kingdom of God is part of the invisible, intelligible, incorporeal, imperishable world.

The author of the Gospel of Matthew went further in differentiating the notion of any earthly kingdom from the Kingdom of Heaven, which is clearly not

⁵¹ John 18:36.

⁵² Luke 17:20.

of this world. For example, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."⁵³ This treasure is not of the corruptible material world, but of the intelligible, eternal world of divine knowledge. The Kingdom of God is clearly of the eternal, intelligible world, a kingdom that has been prepared for the blessed "from the foundation of the cosmos."⁵⁴

The author of the Gospel of Thomas included many sayings concerning the Kingdom of God. An example is the verse "Rather the father's kingdom is spread out upon the earth, and people do not see it," which indicates that the kingdom is invisible and yet present.⁵⁵

Furthermore, when Jesus says, "The Kingdom of God is within you,"⁵⁶ then he is talking about some invisible thing of God's that dwells within us. And what might that be? The obvious, and only acceptable, answer is that the Kingdom of God is either the soul (*psychē*), or something of a divine nature that nourishes the soul, or both.

⁵³ Matt 6:19-21. See parallel of Luke 12:33-34., "a treasure in the heavens that does not fail."

⁵⁴ Matt 25:34.

⁵⁵ Logion 113, in Marvin Meyer, trans., *The Gospel of Thomas: The Hidden Sayings of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 65.

⁵⁶ Luke 17:21.

Jesus expressly and unequivocally said that the soul survives after the death of the body; because men can kill the body, but not the soul.⁵⁷ This is the same view of Plato's that says that the body is mortal, but the soul is immortal. This New Testament verse also implies that the soul is separable from the body after death.

Jesus told a parable that emphasized the falsity of thinking that the *psychē* is the same as the integrated body-soul. Consider the parable of the ***Rich Farmer***.

The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul [*psychē*], 'Soul, you have simple goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool [*aphrōn*]! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be? So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.'⁵⁸

The farmer thought that these material riches would allow his *psyche* to take it easy, eat, drink and be merry - things that a material body can profit from, but a divine, immaterial soul can not. God, calling the rich farmer a fool (*aphrōn*), took his soul that night. This parable makes it clear that no earthly treasure

⁵⁷ Matt 10:28.

⁵⁸ Luke 12:16-21. A story of the rich man who does not know when he will die is also found in Sir 11:18-19. Commentators do not address Jesus' specific addition of *psychē* and *aphron*, as summarized by Arland Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 104-9. Jesus has taken an old story and modified it to address the care of the soul.

enriches the soul. The soul is only made rich by the treasure of divine knowledge, as will be soon discussed. This parable sharply defines the independence of the soul from the body. Jesus is saying that those who think the *psychē* is the integrated body/soul are fools (*aphrōn*). The body needs material nourishment, but the soul needs nourishment from the intelligible world of the divine. There are clearly two separate worlds mentioned in this parable: the material world and the invisible world of the divine.

There are also New Testament verses that show the intellect or soul of a person surviving after death. Jesus told the parable of ***The Rich Man and Lazarus***.

There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames. But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner, evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us. He said, 'Then father, I beg you to send him to my father's house – for I have five brothers – that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.' Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.' He said, 'No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the

prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.⁵⁹

The point applicable to this discussion here is that the intellect of both men survived after death: the former in Hades being tormented in flames, the latter in some place separated from Hades by a great, uncrossable chasm, in a blessed place with Abraham. Abraham and the rich man are in communication across the chasm. The word *psyche* is not used here, but the idea of the intellect surviving after death in some place other than the grave, most certainly separated from the body, is clear. The fact that the rich man wanted water need not confute the Platonic view of the incorporeality of the soul, for the rich are attached and addicted to their worldly vices, their souls weighed down by earthly pleasures and by intoxicating desires that do not stop after death even though the incorporeal soul could not use a drink in the normal human way. Souls being tormented in Hades may want water, but that desire need not imply that they have a body to absorb it.⁶⁰

Plato, however, did not disallow that souls who were being rewarded in the afterlife may enjoy wine. In fact, the righteous soul in its afterlife seemingly

⁵⁹ Luke 16:19-31.

⁶⁰ See Chapter 5 for a discussion of the righteous eating and drinking in the Kingdom of God.

could indulge in wine as if in a symposium, which is a drinking contest, "as if drunkenness were a virtue."⁶¹

Jesus related the immaterial, divine world to the Kingdom of God when he said: "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."⁶²

Jesus taught a message about how to attain divine knowledge, which entailed a considerable amount of hard work, requiring years of learning from an inspired teacher. Jesus' disciples, not unlike the students of Socrates, accompanied their teacher wherever he went and listened as he engaged others in debate about the Kingdom of God. Jesus taught how to see the invisible and hear the inaudible through use of the divine reason inherent in the human soul through the teaching process that requires education, discipline and training in order to succeed.⁶³

Jesus' students were selected from the multitudes that, in turn, were addressed

⁶¹ Plato, *Resp.* 363D. Early Christians thought this way too, according to Martin P. Nilsson, in "Early Orphism and Kindred Religious Movements," *HTR* 28 (1935): 192, 210. Consider also Matt 26:29 and Luke 22:18, 29, "I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Philo noted that the righteous and purified "can drink, being invited to symposia of joy, in which the souls of prophets and messengers rejoice and eat the food of the voluntary laws of imperishable and pure wisdom at the invitation and through the entertainment of God," in *QG* 4.8 (Marcus, LCL).

⁶² Luke 12:32-34. The followers of Jesus needed eternal treasures for heaven, which can only be knowledge of the divine through education and nurture, the only possessions that a soul gets to keep after death according to *Phaed.* 107D.

⁶³ See Vernon K. Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 87-94, for a comparison of the teacher-disciple relationship common to Jesus and Socrates.

in terms akin to riddles: "I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand."⁶⁴ When the disciples were finally able to "see" the Kingdom of God, Jesus rejoiced, saying: "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it."⁶⁵

Paul understood the Platonic theology concerning the difference between the perishable, material body and the imperishable, immaterial Kingdom of God, when he wrote: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. The perishable does not inherit the imperishable," and "the Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."⁶⁶ Paul acknowledged that the invisible world of God had been understood for centuries by the Greek philosophers when he wrote: "Ever since the creation of the world his (God's) eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made."⁶⁷ Paul

⁶⁴ Matt 13:13; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10. Cf. Matt 11:15; Mark 4:9, 23. The use of public riddles as a means of finding a special follower is a Greek notion. For example, see Sophocles, *Oedipus tyrannus* 390-91.

⁶⁵ Luke 10: 23-24.

⁶⁶ 1 Cor 15:50; Rom 14:17. This is not to say that Paul subscribed to the theology of Jesus that was compatible with that of Plato, for Paul could not have preached the gospel of the kingdom of God as understood and taught in the *synagōgēs* by Jesus. Paul had never heard Jesus teach. What Paul himself preached was nothing "except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (Gal 1:12; 1 Cor 1:23, 2:2).

⁶⁷ Rom 1:20. In Rom 1:19-32, Paul is apparently railing against the Greek Gentiles, who recognized that the philosophers had knowledge of the divine and truly knew God. Inexcusably,

knew of the two-worlds when he wrote "He (Jesus) is the image (*eikōn*) of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and earth are created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominations or rulers or powers – all things have been created through him and for him."⁶⁸ The aforementioned Platonism is obvious in Paul's statement that whatever can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.⁶⁹

Origen interpreted the Kingdom of God exclusively along Platonic lines of theology, carefully distinguishing Jesus' Kingdom of God from Paul's Kingdom of Christ, as follows:

If "the kingdom of God," according to the word of our Lord and Savior, "cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! Or, Lo, there!" but "the kingdom of God is within us"⁷⁰ ("for the word is very nigh, in" our "mouth, and in" our "heart"⁷¹)[emphasis original], it is evident that he who prays that "the kingdom" of God should come prays with good reason that the kingdom of God should spring up and bear fruit and be perfected in him. For every saint who takes God as his king and obeys the spiritual laws of God dwells in himself as in a well-ordered city, so to speak. Present with

however, the philosophers did not worship and glorify God, preferring instead to pray to statues and idols, and thus to exchange their wisdom of the divine for foolishness. The point here is that Paul is validating the Greeks' philosophy that learned the knowledge of the divine but is condemning the Greeks' practices of not honoring it. They had the precious knowledge and yet slipped back into being corrupted by bodily lust. Paul is thus accrediting the community of the Romans, at least, to be knowledgeable in the *koine* philosophy. John J. Collins, in *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 231, agrees that, here, Paul endorses the natural theology of the Gentiles.

⁶⁸ Col 1:15-16. This makes sense in the Middle Platonic system if and only if one could imagine Jesus as a personification of the divine *Logos*, or Reason of God, which created the invisible world and caused the creation of the visible world.

⁶⁹ 2 Cor 4:18.

⁷⁰ Luke 17:20-21 [original footnote].

⁷¹ Deut 30:14; cf. Rom 10:8 [original footnote].

him are the Father and Christ who reigns with the Father in the soul that has been perfected, in accordance with the saying which I mentioned a short time ago: "we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."⁷² (And I think that by God's kingdom is meant the blessed state of the reason and the ordered condition of wise thoughts; while by Christ's kingdom is meant the words that go forth for the salvation of those who hear them and the works of righteousness and the other virtues which are being accomplished: for the Son of God is "Word" and "righteousness."⁷³) [emphasis original] ... He who prays to obtain "the word of knowledge" and "the word of wisdom" will always fittingly pray for these things, for he will go on receiving more and more intuitions of "wisdom" and "knowledge" as his prayers are continually heard, howbeit he will "know in part" as much as he is able to receive in this present life; but "that which is perfect, doing away with that which is in part, shall then be made manifest when, "face to face,"⁷⁴ the mind without sense perception comes in contact with spiritual realities. . . . As we advance unceasingly, "the kingdom of God" that is in us will reach its highest point" ⁷⁵

Origen's work thus supports three key areas of this thesis. The first is the notion that the Kingdom of God is within the human heart and soul, and that it is the product of reason and the ordered condition of wisdom in the soul. The second key area is that the Kingdom of God within us can grow to the point where it springs up and bears the fruit of a perfected soul. The third point is that when this wisdom and knowledge is obtained through reason, not the senses,

⁷² John 14:23 [original footnote].

⁷³ Cf. John 1:1, 14; 1 Cor 1:30 [original footnote].

⁷⁴ 1 Cor 13:9, 10, 12 [original footnote].

⁷⁵ Or. 13.1-2. Chadwick & Oulton, *Alexandrian Christianity*, 289-90. See also Chadwick's comments on Origen's Platonic conception of the immaterial God and material world (193-94, 219).

the soul shall come “face to face” with *spiritual realities* (Plato would say God's *Ideas*).

A Summary of Jesus' Gospel of the Kingdom of God

In Jesus' gospel, there are several repeated themes of the Kingdom of God; some are specifically emphasized and expressed by means of parables, and others may stand alone. It will be shown that each and every one of the themes involved was in essence about salvation by pursuit of virtue as taught previously by Socrates and Plato, was part of the training within the corresponding ongoing philosophical schools, and was likely a part of the *koine* philosophy in Hellenistic Jewish communities. However, where Plato required entire books to bring out his message in argumentative dialog, the gospel of Jesus needed only pithy statements and parables. The earlier tradition of Jewish philosophers was known for the ability to reduce a complex concept of Greek philosophy down to one that was “free from the pedantry of Greek wordiness, a philosophy which sets its pupils to practice themselves in laudable actions.”⁷⁶ That is, Jewish philosophers took Greek philosophy, which entailed a lot of difficult words and concepts understood by only an elite few, and brought it to the *synagōgē* for all to hear and attempt to put into practice. Whoever constructed this gospel, and it may have been Jesus himself, was able to break down the protracted and complex ethical teachings of Platonic thought into simple and

⁷⁶ Philo, *Prob.* 88.

straightforward statements. The gospel of the Kingdom of God expresses the very best of what Plato and his followers had said, but in simplified language and style. The pithy style and ethical content of the parables was easy to remember and powerful enough to bring about, for many, a decision of commitment to the new life of virtue and wisdom advocated by Jesus. Jesus' disciples, who were being taught by the philosophical method, were inculcated with the theology of the Kingdom of God that required years of discipleship in order to understand, and that the multitude of listeners could not be expected to follow easily.⁷⁷

One of the themes that were taught by Plato, Philo, and Jesus involves the necessity to perfect the soul by purification and separation from the corruptions associated with lust and greed, not necessarily the total elimination of bodily desires altogether, but the implementation of the practice of getting the body under the control of the reasoning soul. This discipline of the passions was the first of the four virtues – later termed the *cardinal* virtues – that were first emphasized by Plato. The four virtues are: (1) the repentance, or turning, from the passions that results in *sobriety*, (2) the *courage* to persevere when this sobriety is tested, (3) the attainment of *wisdom* via the hard work of learning divine knowledge once the passions are in control, and (4) the practice of *justice* to fellow humans that may validly be expected to be reciprocated by God, on

⁷⁷ For the difficulty in teaching the multitude, see Mark 4:11; Matt 7:6, 13:11; Luke 8:10. For the fact that the gate is narrow and the way is hard, see Matt 7:13; Luke 13:14, 19:11-27.

God's terms, and on God's schedule – but not without a little glimpse of the divine as progress is made.⁷⁸

The turning of the mind, or repentance, is partly about the need for purification by getting lust and sexual desire under control, is exemplified by Jesus asking that his followers become as innocent as little children.⁷⁹ Another part of repentance is that it is critically essential to eliminate of the desire for wealth, which is a major factor in the weighing down of the soul.⁸⁰

Jesus also preached an eschatological theme concerning the afterlife, that of drinking with, talking to, and enjoying the community of the saints in the afterworld who had “seen the face of God,” something looked forward to by both Socrates and Jesus.⁸¹ These terse themes that Jesus expressed to the multitudes in his particular way are fully consistent with the *koine* philosophy based on Plato and his followers, but they are also something more, for they go beyond Plato in their simple and elegant approach. The irony was that Jesus' message was straightforward only to those listeners familiar with the *koine*

⁷⁸ E.g., *Resp.* 427E, 402C, 536A. Plato discusses these four virtues in many places.

⁷⁹ See Mark 10:14-15; Matt 18:3-4, 19:14; Luke 18:16-17. Cf. Matt 19:12.

⁸⁰ Matt 19:23-24; Mark 10:23-25; Luke 18:24-25. Cf. Matt 5:3.

⁸¹ See Matt 8:11; Mark 14:25; Luke 14:15, 28-29; 22:16-18 for the community of saints with God. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were unique in the Old Testament in having seen God, per Exod 6:3; Gen 18:1; 26:2; 32:24, 30. Philo also often mentions this triad as three who yearned for wisdom and virtue (*Sacr.* 5-7; *Migr.* 125; *Congr.* 34-38; *Mut.* 12; *Somn.* 1.166-73, *Abr.* 48-56; *Praem.* 24-51). Jacob, in particular, sees God face to face (*pāniys*), in Gen 32:30. Cf. Judg 6:22. Note also Philo QG 4.8, “For the eye of the soul, which is very lucid and bright, is dimmed before it falls upon and gazes at Him who is in His oneness without anyone else at all being seen (Marcus, LCL). For New Testament references to the face of God, see Matt 18:10; 1 Cor 13:12; Rev 22:4.

philosophy of the day, and the meaning was lost when that foundational knowledge was forgotten after having been usurped by another view, as discussed above.

The messages inherent in the parables that specifically address the Kingdom of God, however, are of a quite strong nature. The Kingdom of God is not to be recognized by everyone, as the parables of **The Fishnet** and **The Lost Sheep** disclose, but finding the one of the hundred sheep, or the good fish in the net of fish, is a great joy to God.⁸² Those who accept the gospel of the Kingdom of God are an elite few, but anyone can rise above the multitude and enter the Kingdom of God if they choose correctly. Many will not. God has invited all souls to the wedding banquet of the Kingdom of God, the marriage of the human soul with the divine *Logos*, but many will refuse because they are corrupted by worldly material attachments: one to his field, or property; another to his business; another to his new teams of oxen; another to his new wife.⁸³ Only those who are not attached to such worldly things are welcome in the Kingdom of God.⁸⁴

⁸² Matt 13:47-50; 18:12-14; Luke 15:4-7. The Matthean text of the parable of **The Fishnet** and the parable of **The Lost Sheep** is given in Chapter 5. Note that the parallels in the *Gospel of Thomas* have the *largest* sheep that is the most loved (107) and only the *biggest* fish that is kept (8).

⁸³ A theme common to both Jesus and Socrates is that a person can become too attached to his or her family. Of particular concern to Plato was the problem associated with favoritism of a father to his son (*Resp.* 457C-D, 461C-D, 572C-E). See Luke 18:29. Cf. Matt 23:9; Luke 12:52-53. For this concept of the wedding between the human soul and the divine *Logos*, see Ambrose, *Bon. Mort.* 6.22. See further discussion in Chapter 3 and 5 of this thesis.

⁸⁴ Matt 22:2-13 cites those attached to property and business. Luke 14:16-24 cites property, oxen and family. *Gos. Thom.* 64 cites money, a house, a marriage dinner, and an estate

Another example of the condition that will weigh down a person's soul by attachments to the material world, and thus keep him or her out of the Kingdom of God, is the attachment to money, especially for those already rich. It is critical to eliminate the concern with wealth, even if a person is *the very opposite of* rich, who owes the equivalent of billions of dollars (10,000 talents!), as exemplified by the parable of **The Unmerciful Servant**.⁸⁵ Those who love God and pursue the Kingdom of God with all their understanding and strength, and love their neighbors as themselves are not far from the Kingdom of God.⁸⁶

The parable of **The Sower** continues this theme of the elite few, but adds the metaphor of the seed, used also for the parables of **The Mustard Seed**, **The Sprouting Seed**, and **The Planted Weeds**.⁸⁷ The three synoptic Gospel authors include Jesus' explanation of the seed as being symbolic of the *logos* of the Kingdom of God; that is, the *logos* of God.⁸⁸ This metaphor was popular with Plato, Philo, and Seneca, and is an excellent analogy to the Kingdom of God. A

of rental property as examples of the attachments that will not be forsaken by those outside of the Kingdom of God.

⁸⁵ Matt 18:22-35. This parable is traditionally taken as showing the evil of hypocrisy; that is, asking for forgiveness of a large debt but denying a debtor forgiveness of a small debt, according to Hultgren in *Parables*, 30-31. In the larger sense, however, this parable is about an extremely selfish attachment to wealth, even if the afflicted is the antithesis of a rich person.

⁸⁶ Mark 12:32-34. The Matthean text for the parable of **The Unmerciful Servant** is given in Chapter 5.

⁸⁷ The parable of **The Sower** is in Matt 13:3-23; Mark 4:3-20; Luke 8:5-15; and *Gos. Thom.* 9. The Matthean texts for the parables of **The Sower**, **The Mustard Seed** and **The Planted Weeds**, and the Markan text for the parable of **The Sprouting Seed** are given in Chapter 5. Cf. 2 *Esdras* 8:41, which uses the metaphor of seed improperly sown but says nothing about abundant growth of the seed in good soil, which is the point of **The Sower**.

⁸⁸ Mark 4:14; Matt 13:19; Luke 8:11. See Matt 13:38, which refers not to **The Sower**, but to the parable of **The Planted Weeds**, where the good seed represents the sons of the Kingdom.

seed has three important characteristics: having a life of its own, it sprouts and grows on its own without prompting by human activity; it contains its own source of food to establish it; and, the tiniest, almost invisible, seed, when nourished properly, can grow into a large plant. The seed represents (1) the inherent “spark,” or impulse, that it takes to sprout the growth, (2) the divine knowledge that grows the soul all by itself for a while, and (3) the potential to grow into something big when nourished with additional knowledge of the divine. It is both knowledge in itself and the insatiable urge for additional knowledge. God causes the growth but the human recipient must prepare the soil, a metaphor for the soul. The point of **The Sower** is not that the seed sprouts, because it always does; it is how the seedbed is prepared and the fledging seed is nourished and nurtured that makes all the difference, otherwise it is eaten, or scorched, or choked.⁸⁹ The reasons that the seed (wisdom) fails is that it falls on soil that cannot nourish it, either due to lack of sobriety (thorns) or courage (roots). The seed's failure results in its death; the seed's success is rewarded, in either case, being God's justice. The parable of **The Sower** thus expresses the four cardinal virtues of Plato in a very simple, clear, manner.

Humans do not know exactly what happens to make a seed sprout and grow, said Jesus in **The Sprouting Seed**, but it does by itself in the material earth, producing first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head; that

⁸⁹ Mark 4:3-8; Matt 13:3-23; Luke 8:5-15. See Philo, *Post.* 125 for a direct analogy between the seed nourished with water and the soul, either nourished with wisdom to perfection or if deprived, withering away.

is, slowly, mysteriously, quietly, and completely. The soul grows in the same way when nourished.⁹⁰ The message of **The Planted Weeds** is that when seeking wisdom, it is quite possible to be exposed to wrong knowledge, contrary to the true knowledge of the divine.⁹¹ This wrong knowledge cannot easily be stricken from one's mind, thus one must be very careful not to let the enemy plant the weeds of error. Socrates knew that the enemies who planted bad knowledge were the Sophists; for Jesus, the bad teachers were the Pharisees. Socrates, who only had a few pupils, could afford the time to have the pupil's knowledge thoroughly tested by *elenchus*.⁹² Jesus, though, could not address every individual's rationale, for he chose to bring philosophy to the multitude.

The parables of **The Mustard Seed**⁹³ and the invisible **Leaven**⁹⁴ are also simple parables of growth of the soul in the Kingdom of God, and pertain to

⁹⁰ Mark 4:26-29. See also *The Fourth Book of Maccabees* 1:29, which compares reason (*logismos*) with the universal, heavenly gardener, who "purges and prunes and binds up and waters and irrigates by diverse devices; and so tames the wild growth of inclinations and emotions. For reason [*logismos*] is the guide of virtues, and of emotions the sovereign," Moses Hadas, ed. and trans., *The Third and Fourth Books of Maccabees* (New York: Harper, published for Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1953), 151.

⁹¹ Matt 13:24-30. Matthew's explanation of the parable in 13: 36-43 reflects the *recipients* of the good and bad knowledge, instead of the knowledge itself.

⁹² *Elenchus* is a term normally meaning a dialectical examination of one's views by an experienced philosopher. *Socratic elenchus*, however, is a technical term defined by Gregory Vlastos in *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 111, for a refutation that tries to drive the proponent of a notion fully around to negation and admitted denial of that notion. Jesus clearly won many arguments using dialectic, but was not recorded as performing *Socratic elenchus*.

⁹³ Mark 4:31-32; Matt 13:31-32; Luke 13:19; *Gos. Thom.* 20.

⁹⁴ Matt 13:33; Luke 13:20-21; *Gos. Thom.* 96. The Matthean text of the parable of the Leaven is given in Chapter 5.

exactly the same thing as that of the key parable, **The Sower**. The leaven, which works invisibly, is associated with Jesus' teachings of true divine knowledge to expand, or grow, the soul. Jesus differentiates his leaven – that is, his teachings - from that of the Pharisees. The Pharisees' teachings are untrue knowledge that are to be watched out for and avoided.⁹⁵

The parable of **The Sower** placed conditions on the growth in that the seed had to be nourished properly or else it would die. This is further explained by Jesus: "For to those who have, more will be given; and from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away."⁹⁶ The soul is given the seed of knowledge and if not properly nourished, it will shrivel up into nothing and will succumb. It must grow or die.⁹⁷ This message is also inherent in the parable of the **Entrusted Money** whereupon a man gave to each of his three servants, according to their abilities, five talents, two talents or one talent of money, respectively – each being a very large sum. The man receiving five grew it to ten, and the one receiving two also doubled it to four. But the man of least ability did

⁹⁵ Matt 16:6, 11-12. This is the teaching of false knowledge, also warned against by Plato.

⁹⁶ Mark 4:25; Matt 13:12; Luke 8:18. Cf. Matt 21:43

⁹⁷ Philo, like Plato, also understood that divine knowledge was necessary to nourish the soul. He related this nourishment to *manna* from heaven (Exod 16:4; QG 4.102; Leg. 3.162.; Decal. 13).

The notion that God plants a divine seed, in God's image and likeness, into the human soul and nourishes it to grow into the divine nature itself has been explained by various exegetes, perhaps most notably by Meister Eckhart in "Benedictus: Of the Nobleman." For this, see Edmund Colledge and Bernard McGinn, trans., *Meister Eckhart: The Essential Sermons, Commentaries, Treatises, and Defense* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 240-47.

not grow it at all. Those servants who grew the entrustment made their master happy and were rewarded, but the one who did not increase the entrustment had the money taken from him and he was thrown out into the darkness, to weep and gnash his teeth.⁹⁸ He had not acted in a way that would diminish it, and had hid it so that he would not lose it, but the point of the parable is that he was punished for not increasing his valuable entrustment, temporarily loaned to him from the master.⁹⁹ A corollary to this is that our soul is on loan from the divine realm, to be returned at death, with considerable enlargement required and a generous reward waiting for those who accomplish it.¹⁰⁰

The entering of the Kingdom of God is voluntary, and is dependent upon a decision that will become the most important of a person's life. This decision is to dissociate oneself as much as possible from the material world and dedicate one's life to growing the soul by learning all that is possible for a human to know about divine things, which requires hard work and a considerable period of time.¹⁰¹ The parable of **The Two Sons** teaches that it is a fatal mistake for a

⁹⁸ Matt 25:14-30; Luke 19:13-27. The Matthean text of the parable of **The Entrusted Money** is given in Chapter 5. This parable is introduced in Luke 19:11 in reference to the Kingdom of God. Hultgren, *Parables*, 290, notes that the message seems to be that "playing it safe" is actually disobedience.

⁹⁹ This parable is discussed in Chapter 5. Jesus was adamant about wealth being unimportant, which certainly includes the increase of monetary wealth by investment. The parable is not about monetary wealth, but wealth of the soul. The loaning of money with interest is contrary to Jewish law, but included here for dramatic effect.

¹⁰⁰ See Wis 15:8, "when the time comes to return the souls that were borrowed."

¹⁰¹ Plato would say about five years of intensive, full time study and practice of dialectic is required for the complete philosophy (*Resp.* 539E). Jesus personally trained his disciples for

person, when called, to refuse to commit to pursue the Kingdom of God, figuring to learn about divine knowledge on his or her own; it is also a fatal mistake to commit to pursue the Kingdom of God, but not be willing to do the subsequent work involved in growing the soul.¹⁰² Pursuing the Kingdom of God requires a commitment, and like that of a farmer who must plow a furrow straight ahead, there can be no looking back at the past materialistic life.¹⁰³ A person who performs the lip service of recognizing Jesus as Lord, but does not go forth to do the will (*thelēma*) of the Father, will not be able to enter the Kingdom of God.¹⁰⁴

When a person finds the treasure of the Kingdom of God, says the parable of **The Hidden Treasure**, it is like finding buried treasure in a field, whereupon the immediate and major decision must be made to purchase the field. The price of the field, however, is equal to the redemption value of every material object, property or thing that a person may possess, which must be sold to buy the field.¹⁰⁵ It is also like the merchant in the parable of **The Pearl of Great Value**,

about three years, intensifying the area of theology and, we would think, ignoring the philosophical area of politics.

¹⁰² Matt 21:28-32. The Matthean text of the parable of **The Two Sons** is given in Chapter 5. There are three textual variations that lead commentators to choose one son or the other as having done the will of the Father, but none of this matters, because the correct answer to the question can only be that *neither* son did the will of the Father. Hultgren, *Parables*, 214-24, wrongly summarizes the body of exegesis on this parable as saying that it is not the commitment that counts but the deed itself. He misses the point, for both are necessary.

¹⁰³ Luke 9:62.

¹⁰⁴ Matt 7:21. The Matthean text of the parable of **The Hidden Treasure** is given in Chapter 5. Philo, in *Leg.* 3.197, considered the will (*thelēma*) of God to be the freeing of the soul from enslavement to earthy passions.

¹⁰⁵ Matt 13:44.

who, after coming across a costly and precious pearl, sold every item that he had in order to buy it.¹⁰⁶ Pursuing the Kingdom of God is a commitment that requires that a person not be concerned with the accumulation of wealth or material objects. A modern Jesus might say that followers of the Kingdom of God need not worry about their retirement plans, or their children's college funds. First and foremost is to strive for the Kingdom of God, said Jesus, and somehow, enough will come on which to live.¹⁰⁷

The divine knowledge thus attained over the course of one's education grows the soul, which becomes bigger and yet lighter, perhaps similar to what the modern world might consider as analogous to filling a balloon with helium. This educational process continues until, some day, and only for a while perhaps, an epiphany will occur, suddenly, and our human reason will sense the divine realm, and see, with the eye of the soul, the face of God. Even so, a wise person may have a little warning, similar to that of the parable of **The Budding Fig Tree**, wherein it is explained that as one can see the leaves sprout, they know that summer is near, so there are also some signs that the Kingdom of God is near.¹⁰⁸ In fact, a wise person will prepare diligently and wait carefully in

¹⁰⁶ Matt 13:45-6. The Matthean text of the parable of **The Pearl of Great Value** is given in Chapter 5. *Gos. Thom.* 76 overtly states that the pearl is the treasure that is incorruptible and eternal.

¹⁰⁷ Matt 6:33.

¹⁰⁸ Luke 21:29-30. It is realized that this verse can also be read in the context of apocalyptic events that are described in verses preceding this parable. However, this parable is out of place here in Luke.

expectation for the sudden appearance of divine Reason, or the face of God, as did the five wise virgins waiting for the bridegroom in the parable of **The Closed Door**. (Although this is called a parable, it is obviously symbolic, and can be examined as an allegory.) Another five “foolish” virgins did not properly prepare, keeping their lamps but no oil to put in them, analogous to having a body but no soul grown with divine knowledge within it – an empty soul.¹⁰⁹ Another clue is that the five foolish virgins were slumbering – sleepy souls unawakened by divine knowledge. When the bridegroom – the divine *Logos* – came, by the time the five foolish virgins purchased oil for their lamps, the door to the wedding banquet had been shut.¹¹⁰ This parable says that divine knowledge sufficient to grow the soul

¹⁰⁹ Matt 25:1-13; Cf. Luke 13:25. The Matthean text of the parable of **The Closed Door** is given in Chapter 5. It is difficult to interpret the associated *koine* concept of enlightenment that is analogous to sexual union between *Logos* and *Psychē*, except to say that this notion was widely popular. A dormant, unfertile soul that avoids nourishment is like a lamp without oil, good soil without seed, or an empty womb without the seed of a man. Everyone has a soul, but only when the divine seed of knowledge is planted within it does it become impregnated, to result in growth to maturity. This notion is compatible with Philo's statement in *Praem.* 10-11 that “What we have to consider is that the most vital form of seed [*sporrān*], which the creator sowed in the rich soil of the rational soul [*logike psychē*] (Colson, LCL). Philo, in *Mut.* 94, 116, considered the *Logos* to be the father and the *psychē* to be the mother.

¹¹⁰ Philo considered Reason (*logos*) to be the husband of the soul. Importantly, if the soul, his wife, rejects him, she can never return to her ancient abode (*Det.* 148-49). That is, a soul who rejects Reason cannot return to heaven. In this regard, the virgins can be considered to be the souls of humans prior to the coming of Reason. Likewise, Ambrose, leaning heavily on the concept from Philo, preached that Christ as *Logos* is married to the soul, analogous to the marriage of Isaac and Rebecca of the Old Testament (*Bon. Mort.* 5.20; *Isaac*, 3.8, 6.52). The imagery of a marriage feast and arrival of the groom is a metaphor for what occurs when a soul first becomes enlightened, having shaken off the burden of material desire. See Matt 22:1-10; Luke 12:37; 22:16.

This rich Hellenistic traditional myth of the celebration of the marriage of the soul to the divine *Logos*, which constitutes the soul's salvation, has resemblance to the later story of Psyche and Cupid in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* 5:22f. An early Jewish myth of this marriage, however, is found in the story of *Joseph and Aseneth*, written about 0 B.C, wherein the “son of God” Joseph transmits to the beautiful and purified Aseneth (see Gen 41:45) “the ineffable mysteries of God”

properly cannot be obtained in a few hours, days or weeks, or perhaps even a few years. A person cannot wait until they are about to die, and then quickly get his or her soul into the proper condition necessary to enter the divine realm permanently. Even so, if a person did not receive the call to pursue the Kingdom of God until late in life, there very well might still be time left to reap the full reward, or so says the parable of **The Vineyard Laborers**.¹¹¹

Even with the proper nurturing of the soul by education and practice, and no matter how virtuous the student may be, the exact period of time that any particular person requires in order to see the Kingdom of God varies. Some arrive at that point relatively soon, some require most of a lifetime. Some die before getting to that stage. Jesus was confident that some of his disciples would see the own manifestation of the Kingdom of God before their death.¹¹² If a

and feeds her the bread of life and immortality, wherein she receives the "spirit of life," the "spirit of wisdom," and the "spirit of truth" and is "anointed with the unction of incorruption" (19.3). A later, but more complete version of the myth is found in the Nag Hammadi treatise *The Authentikos Logos*, which Roelof van den Broek says is Platonic, not Gnostic, in "The Authentikos Logos: A New Document of Christian Platonism," VC 33 (1979): 260-86. In this document, the bride is clearly defined as the soul, and the bridegroom the divine *Nous*, assisted by the *Logos*.

See also Robert Grant, "The Mystery of Marriage in the Gospel of Phillip," VC 15 (1961): 129-40, where Grant differentiates the traditional Old Testament concept of God participating in a marriage to Israel (e.g. Hosea 1-3) from the aforementioned notion of Philo's concerning God's *Logos* in union with the individual human soul. Chapter 3 of this thesis traces this notion of the *Logos-Psyche* marriage from Philo back to Neo-Pythagorean thought, possibly to Pythagoras.

¹¹¹ Matt 20:1-15. The Matthean text of the parable of **The Vineyard Laborers** is given in Chapter 5. Hultgren, *Parables*, 42-43, says this parable is about the mercy of God, who allows the late-comers into the Kingdom. But in the Platonic system, entry to the Kingdom of God requires righteousness and a certain amount of education in divine matters, which typically requires a few years to obtain, and the sooner started the better. Even so, it still may not be too late.

¹¹² Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27. See Mark 15:43; Luke 23:51, where several had completed their training and were patiently awaiting this manifestation.

person reaches this exalted state while alive, it is certain that it will continue after death, for whatever is bound or loosed on earth – bound to the Kingdom of God and loosed to bodily passions – will be so also in heaven.¹¹³

There are a very few things associated with the Kingdom of God preached by Jesus that do not have strong, established precedents in the teachings of Plato. One is the casting out of demons, made possible by the presence of the Kingdom of God.¹¹⁴ Plato recognized the presence of demon-like psychological phenomenon that was related to human reason being unable to control the bodily desires, producing a madness or mania. Plato did not say how to get rid of this condition quickly, but did discuss the longer processes of education and discipline. Jesus, however, was able to dispel this condition quickly.¹¹⁵

Jesus said that since the advent of John the Baptist, the entrance to the Kingdom of God had been attempted and carried out by the use of force (*bia*).¹¹⁶ This can be understood in consideration of Plato's description of the three ways

¹¹³ Matt 13:52.

¹¹⁴ Matt 12:28; Luke 10:9, 11:20. Both the expressions "finger of God" and "spirit of God" mean the *Logos*, or wisdom and reason of God. See Philo, *Mig.* 85, for the equivalence of finger and wisdom of God.

¹¹⁵ The exorcising of demons occurs in both Greek and Hellenistic literature, even though Josephus ascribes it to Solomon (*Ant.* 7.2.5). Demon possession is described in the Greek *Magical Papyri*, including an exorcism formula. See Hans Dieter Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells* (2nd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), PGM XXXVI 178-87, 256-64; LXX 26-51; LXXXV 1-6; XCIV 17-21. Cf. Lucian, *Lover of Lies*, 16.

¹¹⁶ Matt 11:12; Luke 16:16.

to salvation.¹¹⁷ One of the ways was that of the philosopher, who taught his disciples the method of dialectic, especially the techniques of critical questioning, driving toward *elenchus*. This questioning was applied to any philosophy being advocated by anyone claiming to be a valid teacher, and would seem to describe the interaction between Jesus and certain Pharisees. After considerable exposure to this teaching, a person hopefully becomes enlightened, can be converted, and is well on the way to see someday the “face of God.” This way involves education before conversion and seems to be very close to the method of Jesus. But another method described by Plato is that of force (*bia*), whereby someone, not necessarily a philosopher, compels another person toward the painful process of conversion and “enables him [or her] to see the things higher up.”¹¹⁸ This force starts him or her to contemplate and reason out just what the cause was, to be followed, hopefully, by catharsis, conversion, and an enlightenment of sorts, sometimes physically.¹¹⁹ This way involves conversion

¹¹⁷ Plato's three ways are associated with three types of savior, described in Chapter 2 as (1) the righteous person on a mission, (2) the philosopher-savior, and (3) the love advisor. Only the first two are described in this section. Philo also had three analogous ways to see the face of God, which will be discussed in Chapter 3.

¹¹⁸ *Resp.* 516A-B (Shorey, LCL). Clearly, the first step toward enlightenment is the hardest to begin, whereupon sometimes force by an outsider helps greatly.

¹¹⁹ See *Resp.* 515E for forced (*bia*) conversion, *Pol.* 296B-D for forced healing. For education and persuasion being vastly superior to force for effecting righteousness, see *Resp.* 536E, 554C, and 558D. *Resp.* 557D-E discusses the problems of confusion and repentance for a soul forcibly driven by desire. For love being superior to force, see *Symp.* 196C. See Philo, *Somn.* 2.292-94 for repentance (*metanoia*) and the need to force (*bia*) the passionate nature of the soul into submission as a charioteer pulls on the reins, forcing a tightening of the muzzle of the horse, using Plato's analogy in *Phaedr.* 246E. Cf. *Mos.* 1.25, where Moses forcibly controlled his passions.

and commitment *prior* to the education process. The early convert in Plato's system still had to undergo the necessary education and training. Perhaps the conversion process used by John the Baptist, that of baptism of the body as it is forced under water, was what Jesus meant by the use of force. Very little is known about John's baptismal practices. Baptism was a "death to passion" and may have been more than a quick dip; it may have approached a life-threatening re-evaluation of one's past similar to the "baptism into death" of Romans 6:4. Jesus himself was not said to have baptized people, nor to have forced anyone to his way of thinking, but rather to employ the persuasive methods of a teacher of philosophy.¹²⁰ As Schweitzer notes, Jesus' apostles and the 120 believers from Galilee were not baptized.¹²¹ Conversely, John the Baptist was not said to have practiced philosophy and, it seems, was not part of the Kingdom of God.¹²²

There are two more difficult statements made by Jesus concerning John the Baptist and the Kingdom of God. John is said to be the least in the Kingdom (Matt 11:11; Luke 7:28), as is someone who breaks the commandments (Matt 5:19). There is simply not enough material in the Kingdom of God gospel to determine exactly what the problem was here, if there was a problem at all. Certainly, the styles of John and Jesus were different, yet both proclaimed the presence of the Kingdom of God. The fact that both Plato and Philo described three different styles or paths to enlightenment may help explain the differences between the approaches of John and Jesus.

Clement of Alexandria explained that *Logos*, the Teacher, educates by means of mysteries "For it is not his way to compel one who is able of himself to obtain salvation by the exercise of free choice and by fulfilling all that is required on his part [reference to Plato *Resp.* 620E] so as to lay hold on the hope." "On Spiritual Perfection," *Strom.* 7.1.6, in Chadwick & Oulton, *Alexandrian Christianity*, 96.

¹²⁰ John 4:2.

¹²¹ "As men who had been with Jesus they did not need baptism." Schweitzer, *Kingdom of God*, 140.

¹²² Matt 11:11; Luke 7:28.

The message of Jesus was not only consistent with Hellenistic Judaism; it was also a valid portrayal of the basic ethics and theology of Plato. It incorporated Greek thought in a way that was often too Greek for the Pharisees, themselves Hellenized but not disciplined followers of Plato's theology. The Pharisees tended to defend traditional, non-Hellenized Jewish thinking, and apparently did not think much of the philosophical Kingdom of God idea.¹²³ Jesus' approach was a blend of traditional Jewish and Greek philosophical thinking, as was that of Philo and several others. Jesus particularly delighted in training a Jewish scribe, who was a person that could read and write traditional (old) Jewish literature. A scribe who was also enlightened in the (new) Greek ideas was like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.¹²⁴

The Absence of Apocalyptic Material in Jesus' Gospel

The ninety-nine verses cited above concerning Jesus' statements about the Kingdom of God had to have formed the content of his gospel of the Kingdom of God. The aforementioned exegesis of the Kingdom of God material did not require one iota of change to the original Greek verses. Nor was it necessary to provide an elaborate explanation, diagrams, and analysis of sentence structure.

¹²³ Matt 23:13. The Pharisees locked people out of the Kingdom of God by forbidding them to follow Jesus, and rarely followed him themselves (Matt 23:13). They did, however, debate with Jesus and some were friendly enough to have dinner with him (Luke 11:37).

¹²⁴ Matt 13:52.

No statement attributed to Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God was discarded or ignored. It was not necessary to accuse the apostles or the early Church of corrupting the text, as do most modern interpreters.¹²⁵ Even so, when interpreted along *koine* philosophical lines, each of the messages is simple, clear, and complete. This should become even more convincing once the Platonic theology within the next chapter is digested.

This is not to say that the apostles were beyond reproach in regard to making unintentional mistakes or even intentionally modifying the earlier material. There appears to be an abundance of modern criticism that, if accepted at all, makes the biases of the authors of the Gospels likely, and some of these criticisms may very well be valid. In regard to the Kingdom of God verses attributed to Jesus, however, the meaningful message is still intact, suggesting that although the Gospel authors may have dared to modify some of the words of Jesus, they may not have changed anything that Jesus said within his personal gospel of the Kingdom of God.

Some of the above citations of the Kingdom of God occur only in the Gospel of Mark, others in Q, others only in the Gospels of Matthew or Luke. The Platonisms of gospel of the Kingdom of God cannot be attributed to the particular viewpoint of one author, or two, but occur in all Gospels and their sources. No

¹²⁵ Even John Dominic Crossan, *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge Press, 1992), 3, 4, 45, says that Mark himself creatively revised and rephrased his sources with editorial tampering, and that the primitive church further modified the text.

one author can be responsible for the Platonic philosophy underlying Jesus' gospel. It must be therefore considered that the gospel of the Kingdom of God represents the earliest layer of the Jesus tradition. Over a century ago, Adolf von Harnack came to similar conclusions.

If anyone wants to know what the kingdom of God and the coming of it meant in Jesus' message, he must read and study his parables. He will then see what it is that is meant. The kingdom of God comes by coming to the individual, by entering into his soul and laying hold of it. True, the kingdom of God is the rule of God; but it is the rule of the holy God in the hearts of individuals; *it is God himself in his power* [original emphasis]. From this point of view everything that is dramatic in the external and historical sense has vanished; and gone, too, are all the external hopes for the future. Take whatever parable you will, the parable of the sower, the pearl of great price, of the treasure buried in the field – the word of God, God himself is the kingdom. It is not a question of angels and devils, thrones and principalities, but of God and the soul, the soul and its God.¹²⁶

Harnack reached this conclusion in a different way, without consideration of either the Hellenistic theological system stemming from Plato, or by the isolation of the Kingdom of God sayings and parables attributed to Jesus from the remainder of the New Testament. Nevertheless, he seems to have grasped the meaning of Christianity.

It should not escape anyone's attention that the above reconstruction of Jesus' gospel of the Kingdom of God includes no mention of the hope for bodily resurrection and no apocalyptic material whatsoever, including any mention of the "Son of Man" or an expected Messianic kingdom. For that matter, many of

¹²⁶ Adolf von Harnack, *What is Christianity?* (trans. Thomas Bailey Saunders; 1901. repr., Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 56.

the so-called tenets of Christianity are missing from the gospel of Jesus, among them are demon-possession, a devil, a messiah, a prediction of a crucifixion and/or resurrection, a Jewish salvation economy, and any mention of a forgiveness of sins, theology of the Cross, Church or Trinity. Nevertheless, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, Jesus' gospel includes the essential elements of what one needs to know concerning how to achieve salvation and get the soul on a path toward its home.

There are indeed possible references to apocalyptic expectations within other areas of the synoptic Gospels, but not one verse reflecting apocalyptic thought is directly connected with the Kingdom of God. For example, in the entire thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of Mark, the "little apocalypse," a favorite among apocalyptic advocates, the expression Kingdom of God does not occur. Even so, although it remains arguable that Jesus was said to have made apocalyptic statements privately to his disciples,¹²⁷ they were not included within his gospel of the Kingdom of God. After all, Jesus preached to the multitude only in parables, and there is not one parable specifically concerning the Kingdom of God that is clearly found herein to be apocalyptic.

Jesus preached a gospel that said that the Kingdom of God had both
come, and was near. This is how the Kingdom of God works, for one righteous,

¹²⁷ Mark 13:3 says that the "little apocalypse" is a private discussion, not a preaching to the multitude. It may have been based on an authentic statement of Jesus that was intended to amplify other concepts. In this thesis, any apocalyptic interpretation of the authentic sayings of Jesus is deemed to be impossible. Even so, it will be shown in the next chapter that Plato also made elaborate apocalyptic statements within his dialogs, but used them only to amplify arguments concerning the philosophical subjects of ethics and politics.

trained, person may see the "face of God" today, another tomorrow, and yet another not in his lifetime. The Kingdom of God was present for quite a few in Jesus' time, is presently here today for some, is ongoing in process for many, will yet come someday for others, and may never come for many more. In regard to timing, it can be agreed that Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer were correct in that the Kingdom of God was a future event to be looked forward to by Jesus and his contemporaries; C. H. Dodd was correct that the Kingdom of God was realized in Jesus' time; and Joachim Jeremias was correct in that the Kingdom of God is progressive, in process, and imminent.¹²⁸

Unfortunately, after Harnack, only C. H. Dodd had an acceptable idea as to what the Kingdom of God was and *is*. For Dodd, the Kingdom of God was an other-world order "beyond space and time." The Kingdom of God could be entered by the mind of a living person on earth that would ultimately become, for the person involved, a place where the blessed dead live forever "like the angels."¹²⁹ Dodd's interpretation of the Kingdom of God was fairly close to that described in the above exegesis that used Platonic philosophy. Dodd, however, never admits to using Platonic thought, although he was somewhat familiar with it

¹²⁸ Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (trans. W. Montgomery; intro. by James M. Robinson; New York: Macmillan, 1968); Dodd, *Parables*; Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (trans. S. H. Hooke; 2nd ed.; Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972). Unfortunately, Dodd's term *realized eschatology* implies past tense; that is, it happened during Jesus' time, and is done.

¹²⁹ Dodd, *Parables*, 28, citing Mark 12:25.

because he cited Plato in other works.¹³⁰ In his last edition of *The Parables of the Kingdom*, Dodd concludes:

For, if the argument of this book is right, the parables represent the interpretation which our Lord offered of his own ministry. It appears that while Jesus employed the traditional symbolism of apocalypse to indicate the "other-worldly" or absolute character of the Kingdom of God, He used parables to enforce and illustrate the idea that the Kingdom of God had come upon men there and then. The inconceivable had happened: history had become the vehicle of the eternal; the absolute was clothed in flesh and blood. Admittedly, it was a "mystery," to be understood by those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, by those to whom it is revealed "not by flesh and blood, but by My Father in Heaven." It is in this context that the parables of the Kingdom of God must be placed.¹³¹

Dodd's position was criticized, in some cases severely, by those who demanded that Jesus' message was one of apocalyptic prediction, a sudden end of the entire material world by cataclysmic action, wherein only the saved Christians survive by an act of God. This thesis, as did that of Dodd's, offers an alternate to the apocalyptic mind set of others.

Hellenization in the Jewish World

Chapter 3 addresses the background and situation in Palestine during the life of Jesus that can explain how the philosophical tenets of Plato could be known to the carpenter's son from Galilee. The aforementioned *koine* philosophy,

¹³⁰ C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953). Dodd cites Plato's *Symp.*, *Lach.*, *Resp.*, and *Tim.*

¹³¹ Dodd, *Parables*, 158-59.

prevalent in Palestine and the Diaspora before, during, and after the time of Jesus must be discussed in depth. This philosophy seems to be everywhere one looks: within virtually every Hellenistic text, in Jesus' gospel of the Kingdom of God, in Q, Mark, Matthew's special material, Luke's special material, John's Gospel, Paul's epistles, and certainly the writings of the early Church fathers. Furthermore, it is not superficial philosophy that involves a few elements of common knowledge, but reflects the depth associated with repeated exposure to its advocates. For example, the idea of the divine *Logos*, which was prominent among Philo and other Middle Platonists and Middle Stoics, as one might expect, is also in the above Kingdom of God gospel of Jesus in the parable of **The Sower**, in Paul's epistles, in John's Gospel, and, later, in Justin's *Apology*, all with some variation.¹³² The use of *Logos* and other terms was not just for learned scholars such as Philo and Justin, but were readily recognized by the multitudes when being preached by Jesus to outdoor crowds and in *synagōgēs* throughout Galilee. What was going on that resulted in a common knowledge of the complexities of the theological terms *logos*, *nous*, *psychē*, and others, packed though the words were with centuries of Greek philosophical exposition, to be understood throughout wherever Jews lived?

It is only within the last few decades of the modern era that scholars have had to reexamine the earlier idea that the Jews in Palestine during the time of Jesus were not monolithic, but consisted of a complex mixture of newer Greek

¹³² Col. 1:15-17; 1 *Apol.* 5, 12, 20, 46; 2 *Apol.* 8, 10, 13; *Dial.* 61.

influenced religious practices amalgamated with that of older traditional Judaism. In order to begin to understand what this meant in regard to Jewish religion, language, and cultural diversity, it is necessary to review the history commencing with the Greek conquest of the area.

The History of the Situation

When Alexander the Great conquered Egypt, Palestine, and Syria in the late fourth century B.C., his followers commenced to colonize the territory almost immediately and thus begun in earnest the Hellenization of Judea. By 301 or so, this area of the Levant was divided between two major Greek leaders: Seleucus I, who ruled Syria, and Ptolemy I Soter, who ruled Egypt, Palestine and Coele Syria (which included Phoenicia and Lebanon). These men and their successors, the Ptolomies and the Seleucids, would rule greater Egypt and Syria, respectively, until the takeover by the Romans. The territories of Palestine and Coele Syria, however, constituted the military buffer in the middle, between the seats of the two empires. This middle territory was coveted by both sides, and the borders were fought over from time to time. Relative peace lasted in Palestine under rule of the Ptolomies for about one hundred years, until the Seleucids drove the Ptolomies out of Palestine. Jews in the disputed territory had fought under both of the Greek armies, assimilated into the Greek culture, learned the language, and became familiar with the superior and impressive

Greek military technology and tactics.¹³³ For this century, the Greeks and Jews lived relatively peacefully in the Palestinian cities, and the Greek culture and language slowly replaced the Hebrew and Aramaic of the Jews. Galilee and Samaria, the territories closest to the military border, were the most Hellenized and open to foreign influences. Judea was more conservative and somewhat backward in this regard.¹³⁴

Within decades of the initial Greek conquest, the city of Alexandria had been constructed, including what soon was to become the world's largest library. Jews were imported into Egypt and put to work in military forts, but many ended up comfortably in Alexandria, which soon became the city with the world's largest Jewish population.¹³⁵

Martin Hengel, aided by several others, has researched and summarized what others have found regarding tomb inscriptions, ossuaries, names, education practices, literature, coins, and the like to conclude that the inhabitants of Palestine, even those of Jerusalem, had acclimated to the Greek language and culture before the Maccabean era and continued to do so thereafter.

Outside the sphere of Judaism the principle could probably very soon be applied that anyone who could read and write also had a command of Greek. Aramaic became the language of the illiterate,

¹³³ Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (trans. John Bowden; 2 vols.; 2nd ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 1:6-18.

¹³⁴ Hengel, *Judaism*, 1:35.

¹³⁵ *Letter of Aristeas*, 13, states that 100,000 Palestinian Jews were relocated to Egypt under the Ptolomies.

who needed no written remembrances. Weak beginnings of a non-Jewish, Aramaic literature only started to develop in the Byzantine-Christian period, when the significance of Greek in comparison with local vernaculars receded into the background There was no stopping the penetration of the Greek language even in Jewish Palestine, and the young Jew who wanted to rise a stage above the mass of the simple people had to learn it. This process was strengthened by contacts with the Diaspora in Egypt, Asia Minor and the Aegean, above all after the temple in Jerusalem attracted more and more festival pilgrims from there. The significance of Jerusalem grew with the growth of the western Diaspora, though it continued to remain the center of world Judaism, now predominantly Greek-speaking. There was no break in this development even as a result of the Maccabean revolt From the second century BC onwards we can trace the beginnings of a Graeco-Jewish literature in Palestine.¹³⁶

The Hellenization of Palestine was relatively benign under the Ptolomies, prior to their war with the Seleucids, who took the territory around 200 B.C. Things got progressively worse under the Seleucids, culminating with the reign of Antiochus IV that began about 175 B.C.¹³⁷ During the rule of the Ptolomies, Hellenization had slowly advanced into every phase of Jewish culture and was often resented for presenting an intellectual challenge to the tenets of traditional Old Testament theology and practice. The proponents of traditional Judaism knew enough about the Hellenic culture, with its attendant *koine* Greek philosophy, to write polemics against it. These polemics criticized the effects of the Greek culture, especially the aspects that they considered immoral. At this

¹³⁶ Hengel, *Judaism*, 1:59-60.

¹³⁷ Michael E. Stone, ed., *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 3-9.

early stage, it was not the approach of the traditional Jewish authors to dissect and analyze the root philosophy of the Greeks on a theological basis, but simply to complain against it or sometimes condemn it.

Before the Crisis – Defense of the Old Wisdom.

The *old wisdom* was the wisdom of the Torah, interpreted literally, but was also the wisdom attained by accumulated human experience. It is epitomized by the behavior of humans, with human fulfillment found in this life, not the next.¹³⁸ The *new wisdom* was that of the Hellenistic, philosophy-driven, “foreign” approach that was initially offensive to the traditional Jews because it did not practice the honoring of God in an acceptable way. Two strong polemic-apologetic works that address the threat of Hellenistic philosophy are the books of Qoheleth and Sirach, but lesser polemic efforts are also found in the Hebrew Bible in Job 28 and Proverbs 1-9.¹³⁹ At this early stage of battle, the adherents to traditional Jewish and Hellenistic philosophies went head to head, with each side not really understanding the other’s position, only defending its own. It was not

¹³⁸ For a discussion of traditional Jewish wisdom, see J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 221-28.

¹³⁹ Martin Hengel has researched this area thoroughly. See *Judaism*, 1:107-53, for extensive discussion of the development of Jewish literature during the early Hellenistic period; that is, before Antiochus IV. Before this time, there was a “pre-philosophical” stage of late Jewish wisdom, which displays an affinity to Greek popular philosophy” (Hengel, *Judaism*, 1:248). Note that the LXX translation of Proverbs 8:22-31 is strongly Hellenistic, reminiscent of Plato’s *Timaeus*, with a world soul and demiurge, and is likely an early 2nd century B.C. work, as discussed by Hengel, *Judaism*, 1:162-63. Even so, most commentators of Proverbs 1-9 consider the work to be 5th century B.C., hence would have had to be influenced by pre-Socratic philosophers such as Pythagoras, as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

yet a crisis, and Jewish writers were able to criticize sharply the philosophy of the Greeks as being not only impious to the One God, but basically immoral.

Roughly speaking, *old wisdom* resulted from a literal interpretation of the Torah, whereas *new wisdom* involved an allegorical interpretation, with the symbols used within the allegories borrowed from Greek philosophy. Consequently, the allegorical interpretation removed the various anthropomorphisms that had rendered a literal interpretation abhorrent, even comical, to the Greeks. However, an allegorical interpretation of the Torah meant that the word of God was not literal and that the Torah could not be trusted to mean exactly what it said, which was highly offensive to the traditional Jews.

The author of Sirach "formulates a Jewish declaration of war against Hellenism" by asserting that all wisdom comes from the Lord and has been with him from eternity, thus enlarging the framework of Judaism into something universal and cosmic.¹⁴⁰ However, by doing so, Ben Sira produced a description of a hypostatized Wisdom "as a kind of *world reason* emanating from God, which filled and permeated the whole creation." He also found the "culmination of Wisdom's task in the making of man as a rational being."¹⁴¹ The irony of Sirach is that in defending traditional Jewish wisdom by equating it to the Torah and promoting it to a universal, cosmic, hypostasis, Ben Sira has equated Jewish

¹⁴⁰ Hengel, *Judaism*, 1:138. Hengel quotes Rudolf Smend here.

¹⁴¹ Hengel, *Judaism*, 1:159. See Sir 1.9, 19, 24.

wisdom to mean something very similar to Plato's divine Reason, the creator of the Universe, but without reference or direct allusion to Plato.

The Crisis

The Hellenization of Palestine was forced and extreme under the Seleucid Antiochus IV, between 175 and 167 B.C., which began with the introduction of gymnasium education and ended in revolt with the "abomination of desolation." During this eight year period, "Judaism was in acute danger of submitting completely to Hellenistic culture as the result of the assimilation furthered by a powerful aristocratic minority."¹⁴² The subsequent revolt and reign of the Maccabean kings stabilized the deterioration of Judaism that had been headed toward becoming a modified Greek religion, but the general trend toward complete Hellenization was not reversed. Even though the threat of the loss of the entire Jewish religion had been avoided, the crisis forced Jewish intellectual leaders to formulate a plan, or at least a general attitude, to defend Judaism against any similar future onslaught of Greek culture that might spell the end. Clearly, there were two wars going on at the same time. The first was the military conflict of the Greek-trained Maccabean troops against the Seleucid armies. The second was a change in the ongoing strategy to an intellectual war, a war of words. The language of a literary war used here follows Tcherikover.

¹⁴² Hengel, *Judaism*, 1:77.

But in course of time the Jewish writers learned to express all their aspirations and hopes in Greek literary style, and literature became a powerful instrument in their hands for influencing the Jewish reading public, later serving as a means of systematic warfare against anti-Semitism.¹⁴³

The crisis that instigated the verbal “war against Hellenism” was the commencement of a real war, a revolt by the Hasmonean Jews that resulted when events occurred that forced “complete Hellenization” down the throats of Palestinian Jews. According to Tcherikover and several others, the crisis began with the manipulations of Jason, a power-hungry member of the Tobiad family, the family from which the high priest of Jerusalem had traditionally been chosen. The Greek name Jason had been changed from his given Jewish name, Joshua. Jason was an extreme Hellenist who plotted to convert Jerusalem to a Hellenized city, to be renamed Antioch after the current Seleucid king in power, Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Jason apparently approached Antiochus with a plan that included his purchase of the office of High Priest, together with the establishment of a Greek gymnasium and other buildings, and the name change from Jerusalem to Antioch-at-Jerusalem. Basically, Jason paid Antiochus IV “to obtain a permit to Hellenize the Jews and to build a hall for physical training at Jerusalem.”¹⁴⁴

Accordingly, because he could count on this support from within the High Priest’s office, Antiochus IV Epiphanes not only ordered the complete

¹⁴³ Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (trans. S. Appelbaum; 1959; repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999), 350, 527.

¹⁴⁴ Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 60-64.

Hellenization of Judea, but outlawed circumcision, abstinence from pork, and sacrifice in the Jerusalem temple. When he ordered the altar of Zeus placed in the sanctuary of the temple, this “abomination of desolation” sparked the Hasmonean revolution and subsequent rule that lasted until the takeover by the Romans in 63 B.C. Even when the crisis caused by Antiochus IV was over, there remained with some of the Jewish leaders a subsequent unease with the Hasmonean rule, which itself endorsed Hellenism without the physical threat to traditional Judaism. It became clear that a change in intellectual tactics was demanded in order to attempt to preserve much of the traditional Judaism. As Hengel puts it:

*The crisis under Antiochus IV first brought a break in the development and was followed by the freedom fight which favored a radicalization of Jewish piety in a way that is not evident before. From the end of the second century BC this process also embraced the Diaspora and grew stronger under Roman rule down to the catastrophe. ‘Zeal’ became an essential feature of Jewish piety. However, this did not necessarily mean an exclusion of alien influences; on the contrary, Palestinian Jewish Apocalyptic from the time of Daniel, which played its part in this radicalization, was no less open to ‘syncretistic’ tendencies than say wisdom, which is in many ways so different, or the work of Philo.*¹⁴⁵

So began the shift to put zeal into the arguments for the defense of Judaism.

¹⁴⁵ Hengel, *Judaism*, 1:114, emphasis in original.

Battle Plan #1 – The Technique of Allegory

The Greeks, after the conquest of Alexander, had developed a laughing disrespect for the Jewish religion and its chief document, the Pentateuch.¹⁴⁶ The text itself must have been considered comical, with the Almighty God planting trees and vines in a garden, then condemning humankind, who were created immortal, followed by the punishment of becoming mere mortals simply for being naked, befriending a serpent, and eating an apple! Clearly, the Pentateuch was considered to be a hodge-podge, mythical-historical document, and poor at that, with inferior myths and incorrect history about Yahweh, an angry, jealous local god, whose chief competition was a basic agricultural, fertility god named Baal. The Greeks found the many anthropomorphisms of the divinity within the Septuagint to be patently ridiculous and outright comical. For example, Aristobulus had pointed out the difficulty that the Greek king Ptolemy had with Jewish Scripture that said the divine had "hands and arms and face and feet and walking about," and with a voice, all of which had to be taken as an allegory in order to avoid ridicule.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Hengel, *Judaism*, 1:312. For the Greek reformers, "the Torah was the embodiment of superstition and folly."

¹⁴⁷ Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 8.9.38-8.10.2, 13.13.3.

This god Yahweh promised the Jews a land that they could not hold, and a progeny that is commonplace, typical of any fertility god.¹⁴⁸ Worse, this god had commanded its leaders, namely Joshua, to kill every man, woman, and child who stood in the way of acquiring this land, which the Greeks still called Canaan! To the Greeks, there was little worth saving in the Jewish religion. The Greeks had instigated the translation of the Jews' book of myths and revisionist history, and made it available for the interested, but did not choose to synergize any part of the Jewish religion into their own as they had done with several others.

On the other side, Jewish scholars decided that their beliefs were to be defended against what they considered to be the highly offensive Greek practices, such as a common acceptance of polytheism and a lax morality. Fortunately, there existed, especially in Alexandria, Hellenistic Jews who were the products of Greek gymnasium and philosophical schools, and who were steeped in both Greek philosophy and traditional Judaism. These scholars realized that it was imperative that the Old Testament be reinterpreted to circumvent the many anthropomorphisms of the Pentateuch and demonstrate the universal validity of Jewish religion. For example, Yahweh had to be considered as the one universal, cosmic, God. Upon review of Plato's works, as well as that of the Middle Stoics, Jewish scholars realized that the Old Testament could be viewed along the established Greek philosophical lines, to demonstrate a religion that was arguably every bit as good as anything that the Greeks had. The

¹⁴⁸ E.g., Gen 17:20, "I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers."

scholars had a choice. They could either use Greek philosophy to puff up the stories of the Pentateuch – a risky proposition – or, swallowing some pride, use the Pentateuch to puff Greek philosophy by showing that the Jewish stories were examples of the practice of the best of Greek philosophy; that is, the cultivation of the Platonic virtues. The Jewish intellectuals chose the latter, for these were desperate times.

To do this, they used their Greek education that included philosophy and rhetoric to argue in a way that neatly placed the traditional Jewish theology into the systematic structure of Plato's. One principal technique that overcame the aforementioned garden and apple problem was to interpret such things allegorically to fit better with the system of Plato and the Greek philosophers.¹⁴⁹ The guideline became: If it fit well, emphasize it: if it did not, allegorize it. Consider Philo's comment on interpreting Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac along Platonic lines that refer to the invisible, intelligible, world.

But the things which we have been here saying do not appear solely in the plain and explicit language of the texts of the holy scriptures; but they appear, moreover, to exhibit a nature which is not so evident to the multitude, but which they who place the objects of the intellect above those perceptible by the outward senses, and who are able to appreciate them, recognize.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Philo said that supposing that God actually planted trees and vines is utter and incurable stupidity (*Plant.* 32-35), and are "utterly monstrous inventions of men who would overthrow great virtues (*aretē*) like piety and reverence by representing Him as having the form and passions of mankind" (Colson & Whitaker, LCL). Furthermore, the story of Adam and Eve is mythical (*Leg.* 2.19; *Agr.* 96-97).

¹⁵⁰ *Abr.* 200, in *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged* (trans. C. D. Yonge; rev. ed.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993), 428.

When allegorical explanation was used, and Philo used it extensively, what became lost was the credential of verbal inspiration, for allegory meant that the text was not literal, and could not have been God's spoken revelation if humans were free to apply symbols to the otherwise plain words. This was an acceptable price to pay, thought the allegorists, to win credibility in the philosophical debate. Besides, they reasoned, the Greeks had never previously believed that anything in the Old Testament was divinely inspired anyway.¹⁵¹

Battle Plan #2 – The Use of Platonic Thought as Defense

Literature was developed and Jewish schools were formed to teach students how to confront Greek criticism with the new, Hellenistic Jewish philosophy that was as good as that of the Greeks. The Greek philosophies were examined, and, when an ambiguity was found, the interpretation was invariably chosen that would best support the Jewish cause. The literature that resulted from this endeavor was so appropriate, and so well argued, that, later, the "early church fathers took over a large part of their polemic and apologetic arsenal from Hellenistic Judaism," and used it against all pagan religions.¹⁵² John J. Collins summarizes this action, which is exemplified by the shift between the prior approach of Ben Sira and that of Pseudo-Solomon.

¹⁵¹ See H. A. A. Kennedy, *Philo's Contribution to Religion* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1919), 39-44, for a discussion of this.

¹⁵² Hengel, *Judaism*, 1:77. The Church fathers kept this literature intact; else it almost certainly would not exist today.

In the case of both Philo and the *Wisdom of Solomon*, the use made of Greek philosophy was selective. The Jewish authors made much use of Stoic concepts, but ultimately the structure of their thought was Platonic. Platonism allowed them to affirm the transcendence of God, as opposed to the immanent deity of the Stoics. The doctrine of immortality of the soul was acceptable because the belief in a significant afterlife had been popularized in Judaism by the apocalyptic writers. Nonetheless, the biblical tradition was greatly altered when it was interpreted through Platonic lenses. The emphasis on immortality leads to the reversal of much of Ben Sira's value system and opens the way for an ascetic view of life, where childlessness and early death can be viewed positively. The claim that God did not make death also bespeaks a view of the universe that is far removed from that of the Hebrew sage. Still, Pseudo-Solomon believed that he was affirming the essentials of his tradition in affirming the one creator God and rejecting idolatry, infanticide, and sexual perversions. On each of these points he was taking a stand against Greek popular culture but could claim support of the more enlightened philosophers.¹⁵³

David Winston has listed the main contributors to Hellenistic Jewish philosophy as being the authors of *Qoheleth*, which is reminiscent of Socratic dialog; *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, which he says reflects more Stoic philosophy than Platonic; *The Wisdom of Solomon*, a blatant Jewish rapprochement with the Greeks using Platonic teaching, including the divine *Logos*, body/soul separation, and perishable body/immortal soul; *The Fourth Book of Maccabees*, with its emphasis on the immortal soul and use of the word for divine thought (*logismos*) a total of 73 times, with the entire work modeled after the *Gorgias* of Plato; *Pseudo-Aristeas*, with emphasis on salvation through love of learning; the works of Aristobulus, which prefigures the work of Philo and asks the reader to understand the Torah philosophically, but without slipping into the mythological

¹⁵³ J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 230-31.

mode; and finally, the entire work of Philo of Alexandria, with its dependence on Plato's work, divine *Logos*, and conditionally immortal soul.¹⁵⁴

John J. Collins' approach is a little different. He starts with *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* as defending traditional Judaism, and then progresses through *4Q Sapiential Work A* of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the *Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, and finally the *Wisdom of Solomon*, to show the aforementioned shift from traditional Jewish wisdom to Hellenized Platonism.¹⁵⁵

Battle Plan #3 - Greek Philosophy Stems from Judaism?

Early Jewish apologists defended Judaism against the Hellenistic claim of superiority. Among the earliest was Aristobulus, who in 145 B.C. or so not only said that *logos* and *sophia* were related, but also declared that Plato had borrowed heavily from the philosophy and law of the Hebrews. Aristobulus notes that the Hebrew Bible had been translated into Greek well before the Greek conquest, even before the Persian conquest of 525 B.C. He says that Pythagoras (6th century B.C.) "transferred many of our doctrines and integrated them into his own system of beliefs."¹⁵⁶ Aristobulus, about 190 B.C., the first known Jewish philosopher of religion, thought "that Pythagoras, Socrates and

¹⁵⁴ Gregory E. Sterling, ed., *The Ancestral Philosophy: Hellenistic Philosophy in Second Temple Judaism: Essays of David Winston* (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2001), 11-32.

¹⁵⁵ J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 222-32.

¹⁵⁶ Frag. 3, A. Yarbro Collins, trans., "Aristobulus," in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:839. This is discussed further in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Plato, with great care follow Moses in all respects."¹⁵⁷ For that matter, he said that Orpheus, in doctrines accredited to him, imitates Moses. Even earlier, Artapanus (3rd to 2nd century B.C.) said that Moses was known in Egypt as Mousaeus, who was nicknamed Hermes, after the god.¹⁵⁸ Artapanus thought Mousaeus was the teacher of Orpheus,¹⁵⁹ which would make Greek philosophy indebted to Jewish philosophy.

Next, Pseudo-Aristeas (about 200 B.C.) admitted that although philosophically educated Greeks had long had a genuine monotheism; only Judaism appears as the true philosophy of ethical monotheism, a fact on which Greeks should agree. The God of the Jews, says the *Letter of Aristeas*, is the creator and overseer of all, and is the same as Zeus of the Greeks and Jove of the Romans, but with different names.¹⁶⁰ That is, Jews and Greeks worship the same God and have similar wisdom and philosophy – a push toward common origins and syncretism, but an insult to traditional Jews.

Philo says that Moses was educated in Hebrew and Greek, as well as other languages, and learned philosophy both from the Egyptians and the

¹⁵⁷ Frag. 4, A. Yarbro Collins, "Aristobulus," in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:840.

¹⁵⁸ Hermes was the Greek god identified with the *Logos* in Hermetic literature. "In other literature and in other Hermetic texts *ὁ Λόγος* is the divine revealer who brings to man the truth about God. He also functions as the creator of the world and as the mediator between God and man." William C. Grese, trans., *Corpus Hermeticum XIII and Early Christian Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 193.

¹⁵⁹ Frag. 3, J. Collins, trans., "Artapanus," in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:899. However, the Greeks have Musaeus as the *student* of Orpheus, with no association between Musaeus and the early Hebrews.

¹⁶⁰ *Letter of Aristeas*, 15-18.

Greeks, surpassing their knowledge and anticipating their lessons.¹⁶¹ Philo, who thought Moses was an excellent philosopher, described him in terms that would make Moses a great, full-fledged, Middle Platonist!¹⁶² If we use a date for Moses of 1300 B.C., then these hypothetical ancient Greek philosophers would have been centuries before Thales (600 B.C.), the earliest *recorded* Greek philosopher. If we consider Orpheus, mythological or not, as sailing with the Argonauts prior to the Trojan War, then Philo might be believable on dates – 1300 B.C. is almost plausible for Moses getting together with Orpheus to discuss philosophy. The questions of who taught whom, and what was taught, remain two-edged swords.

Josephus, an apologist as well as a historian, albeit biased, claims that the Hebrew language predates the Trojan War, and thus all Greek writing. He says that the Greeks learned the language of writing from the Hebrews.¹⁶³ He also says that Pythagoras knew Jewish doctrines and was "in very great measure a follower and admirer of them."¹⁶⁴ Later, Iamblichus (A.D. 250-325) confirmed that Pythagoras had lived in Egypt for 22 years, visiting "all the temples with the greatest diligence and most studious research, during which time he won the esteem and admiration of all the priests and prophets with whom he associated.

¹⁶¹ *Mos.* 1.21-24.

¹⁶² So says John Dillon in *The Middle Platonists: 80 B.C. to A.D.220* (rev. ed., Bristol, England: Booksprint, 1996), 143.

¹⁶³ Josephus, *C. Ap.* I.2.

¹⁶⁴ *C. Ap.* I.22.

... This is how he visited all of the Egyptian priests, acquiring all the wisdom each possessed.” ¹⁶⁵ Again, who taught whom, and what?

The Commencement of the Jewish Mission

Modern interpreters have speculated about a Jewish mission that occurred during the Hellenistic era in an attempt to convert Greek Gentiles to Judaism. The evidence for this was based on the opinion that the aforementioned Hellenistic wisdom texts smacked of propaganda, or “proselytizing attitudes,” and therefore the recipients must have been potential converts to Judaism. The hypothesis of a mission to convert Gentiles has been abandoned in recent decades.¹⁶⁶ What has survived, and thrived, is the idea of a Jewish mission of apology directed toward fellow Jews, intended to bolster their abilities to, in turn, win the approval and build the esteem of Gentiles toward Judaism.¹⁶⁷ The primary vehicle for this mission was the *synagōgē* practices of lectures and study. Philo, for example, says that “each seventh day there stand wide open in every city thousands of schools of good sense, temperance,

¹⁶⁵ Iamblichus, *The Life of Pythagoras* (4), in *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*, compiled and translated by Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie (ed., David Fideler; Grand Rapids: Phanes Press, 1987), 61. Fideler has edited Guthrie’s earlier translations and compiled them into this sourcebook to form a very useful text for quick reference.

¹⁶⁶ J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 155.

¹⁶⁷ Hans Conzelmann, *Gentiles, Jews, Christians: Polemics and Apologetics in the Greco-Roman Era* (trans. M. Eugene Boring; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 139-233.

John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 262-64, argues that the Jewish mission was not a proselytizing activity with intention to convert Gentiles to Judaism.

courage, justice and other virtues”¹⁶⁸ Not that Jews did not occasionally attempt to convert Gentiles. Josephus relates a conversion of a royal household by a traveling Jewish salesman, Hananias.¹⁶⁹ The content of the Jewish apologetic literature was spread throughout Israel and the Diaspora through the *synagōgē* meetings, which were in actuality platforms for discussion of Jewish Scripture and philosophy.

Consider, for example, the *Wisdom of Solomon*. In 1970, James M. Reese analyzed this text in a way that attempted to support the notion of a mission of the educated Jews to teach the multitudes. Reese forcibly, and wrongly, denies the Platonic influence on the *Wisdom of Solomon*, against many other reviewers, in lieu of a Christian interpretation that looks for a prediction of the coming of Jesus. What Reese correctly finds, however, is that the text is a *protreptic*, that is, an exhortation similar to what a lecturer of a college would give his beginning students – literally an extensive “pep talk” that was written down so that it could be repeated time after time. The author, says Reese, was a teacher in Alexandria, whose goal was to instruct well-educated Jewish students on how to live in a Hellenistic society. The author was a sage, says Reese, who was thoroughly steeped in knowledge of Plato. Because the sage believed that the “chosen people as such had a universal mission to bring the ‘incorruptible light of

¹⁶⁸ Philo, *Spec.* 2.282; J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 155. Note that these represent the cardinal virtues of Plato and the philosophers. It will be shown in Chapter 5 that Jesus’ gospel of the Kingdom of God was structured according to these four virtues.

¹⁶⁹ *Ant.* 20.34-38.

the Law' to all mankind, he wished to guide and encourage this cultured segment of it to carry out this saving role toward pagans of good will in their milieu."¹⁷⁰

What can be learned from Reese is that schools in Alexandria over the years turned out many, likely hundreds of, students with a "mission." This mission, as now realized, was not to convert the Gentiles, but to go forth and teach as many Jews as possible first to realize that their religion and ancestral philosophy was as good, if not better, than anything that the Greeks could brag about, and second, to show Jews how to argue this point in *synagōgēs*, or wherever else an audience could be found.

The spreading of an exhortation is a morale booster. It is a "pep talk" that is intended to enlighten all that hear it. In ancient as well as modern times, the exhortation serves to build up self-esteem and instill a feeling of pride, not just for the individual, but for the community. In the depressing times after the Roman takeover of Palestine, it must have been a blessing to hear, even if the hearer did not fully agree to its content. This uplifting, cheerleading experience was an enthusiastically anticipated and overall pleasant event at participating *synagōgēs*. Jesus' gospel of the Kingdom of God – the good news – was an exhortation that was welcomed in every *synagōgē* in Galilee. The parables within Jesus' gospel of the Kingdom of God are discussed in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

¹⁷⁰ James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and its Consequences* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 154. Reese has misstated the target audience here, which was not the pagans.

The Education of Jesus

The New Testament does not specifically say how Jesus received his education. Yet, we must assume that he had teachers: someone, and somewhere. Surely we are not to believe that Jesus was born with infinite divine knowledge, and thus did not require teaching, for this would deny his humanity. Even for those advocates of higher Christology who consider Jesus as omniscient God, it must be considered that he “emptied himself” of all divine knowledge before he became a human.¹⁷¹ Thus it must be asked: Where did Jesus, as a human, obtain his knowledge of the Kingdom of God?¹⁷²

In considering possible scenarios in regard to where Jesus might have learned the principle elements of Greek philosophy, the notion must be discarded that he was taught in a formal school, such as one of the Greek philosophical schools that were not uncommon in Hellenized Palestine, or even the big city of Alexandria. The reason for rejecting this possibility is that there is no supportive evidence to indicate any formal philosophical training for Jesus.

In any case, it must be allowed that Jesus got his education *somewhere*, possibly self-taught, but more likely taught, at least initially, by *someone else*. Evidence has been presented that, before and during this time frame, the Jewish

¹⁷¹ Phil 2:7.

¹⁷² Plato would consider that Jesus, like all souls, had a complete knowledge of the divine prior to his birth. Ordinary humans, however, do not recollect it until stimulated by the educational process.

philosophical schools in Alexandria were generating many Jewish scholars who were specifically trained to teach and preach apologetics defending Jewish Scripture using Greek philosophy. It is known that many Alexandrian Jews regularly visited Jerusalem, as did Jews from the Hellenistic Diasporas.¹⁷³

It is not necessary to show that Jesus had mastered the Greek language in order to attain an education in Greek philosophy. Jesus used the basics of Platonic thought, likely not a great amount more than the ancestral philosophy that was discussed in Palestinian *synagōgēs* at that time, and this could have been taught and learned in the common Aramaic language used by the lower classes. There is, however, no reason to restrict the education of Jesus in this way, for there is plenty of evidence that Jesus spoke Greek reasonably well. J. N. Sevenster has studied the situation thoroughly.

Now that it has been established mainly on the grounds of archaeological data that all layers of the Jewish population of Palestine in the first centuries A.D. were more or less acquainted with Greek, there is absolutely no reason for rejecting any possibility that Jesus sometimes spoke Greek, e.g. when He preached in the Decapolis or in Trans-Jordan or when He spoke with Pilate, or that the earliest apostles and later Jewish leaders of congregations, such as James brother of the Lord, could speak as well as understand Greek in their intercourse with fellow Christians.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Acts 2:5-11 describes "Jews from every nation under heaven dwelling in Jerusalem," during the Jewish festival of Feast of Weeks (Pentecost). To the contrary, Richard A. Horsley, in *Archaeology, History, and Society in Galilee: The Social Context of Jesus and the Rabbis* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity, 1996), 33, criticizes studies that "grossly overestimate the number of pilgrims in general and the number from Galilee in particular. There is literary evidence for some pilgrims from Galilee, but the numbers were likely small."

¹⁷⁴ Jan N. Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek? How Much Greek Could the First Jewish Christians Have Known?* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 189-90.

Although not necessary, if it can be accepted that Jesus knew Greek, it certainly makes it easier to understand Jesus as a Hellenized Jew who understood Greek philosophy. Origen, as part of his defense against Celsus, says that it was remarkable that such a poor person as Jesus could learn enough philosophy to outdo Pythagoras and Plato.¹⁷⁵ Origen defends Jesus' attainment of philosophy by quoting Plato's *Republic* concerning Themistocles, the 5th century B.C. Greek general, as another example of a poor boy who does well.¹⁷⁶

The Philosophy of the Pharisees

There is plenty of support for the argument that Jewish philosophical schools, at least in Alexandria, were educating students in Jewish apologetics toward Hellenistic Greek philosophy. Hengel and Sandmel say that these debates between Greek and Hellenistic Jewish philosophy took place wherever Hellenized Jews could be found.¹⁷⁷ Several authors have concluded that

¹⁷⁵ Origen, *Cels.* 1.29. Also, in 6.16 and 7.18, Celsus said that Jesus was a poor representative of Plato, and that Jesus had corrupted the Platonic doctrines of *Crito* 49B-E and *Leg.* 743A. See the discussion of Cook, *Interpretation of the New Testament*, 42-43.

Moses Hadas, in *Hellenistic Culture: Fusion and Diffusion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 78, on discussing Plato's famous *Myth of Er*, says "With the new evidence of the penetration of Hellenism even in Palestine, it is hard to imagine that any writer, even one who used Hebrew or Aramaic, would not know of the most striking passage in Plato's most celebrated work."

¹⁷⁶ *Cels.* 1.29, where Origen is using Plato's *Resp.* 329E-330A.

¹⁷⁷ See Samuel Sandmel, *Judaism and Christian Beginnings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 237-38, 267-77. Hengel, *Judaism*, 104, says, "on the whole, it emerges

Pharisees were specifically educated in philosophical matters, and, being scholarly, tended to want to be in the middle of such debates. The Gospels say that Jesus was often in debate with the Pharisees, typically in regard to some point of Pharisaic (well beyond the written Mosaic) law, but also often in discussion of more philosophical areas of teaching. Some Gospel verses depict Jesus in an adversarial position with the Pharisees, who became frustrated near to the point of violence, even plotting to kill Jesus.¹⁷⁸ John Meier says that the adversarial relationship depicted in the Gospels between Jesus and the Pharisees most likely more reflects the early church's struggle with the Pharisees, than that of the historical Jesus.¹⁷⁹ Even so, Jesus was friendly with some Pharisees,¹⁸⁰ on occasion went to their houses for meals,¹⁸¹ and seems to have even included their scribes to recline at dinner with him, with his disciples and sinner guests, at his house in Capernaum.¹⁸² From their confrontations it can be concluded that the Pharisees were teachers in competition with Jesus that

that Hellenism also gained ground as an intellectual power in Jewish Palestine early and tenaciously."

¹⁷⁸ Mark 3:6.

¹⁷⁹ John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (3 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1991), 3:300, 335.

¹⁸⁰ John 3:1.

¹⁸¹ Luke 7:36-50; 11:37.

¹⁸² Mark 2:15-16. Tcherikover, in *Hellenistic Civilization*, 125, says, "At all events (we must eschew dogmatism, since lack of evidence permits only conjecture), in the early Hellenistic period the class of scribes held a respected place among the various classes of the capital [Jerusalem], and the nation's entire brains – its intelligentsia, to use a modern term, was concentrated among the men of that class."

served as debating partners, or interlocutors, not dissimilar to those of Socrates.¹⁸³

The Pharisees, according to Josephus, were similar to a Greek philosophical school,¹⁸⁴ somewhat like the Stoics. Josephus does not discern the Middle Stoics from the Middle Platonists, which in the 1st century had essentially melded their major differences. The Pharisees, says Josephus, believed in the immortality of the soul and a final place of reward or punishment after death. They may have believed in reincarnation, or possibly resurrection, he says, surprisingly. Their belief in immortality of the soul, a Greek concept, indicates that the Pharisees were Hellenized. However, John Meier thinks that they also believed in traditional doctrine, such as the sweep of Jewish salvation history. This history commences with Israel's election and reception of the Law, progresses through sanctification by observance of the Law, the fulfillment of the promises of the prophets, the coming of the messiah, the resurrection/reincarnation of the dead, and the final judgment and blessings of the last days.¹⁸⁵ It is to be recognized that there were different levels of Pharisaic thought; for example, consider the differences between Hillel, Shammai and Paul. As John Meier has concluded regarding Pharisaic practices, there was "no

¹⁸³ For a comparison between Jesus and the Pharisees, and Socrates and the interlocutors, see Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher*, 139-41.

¹⁸⁴ *J.W.* 2.8.14; *Ant.* 18.1.3; *Life* 2.12.

¹⁸⁵ Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 3:325.

monolith in the 1st century.”¹⁸⁶ Jesus and the Pharisees would have agreed on many points, says Meier, but disagreed on the following issues: present yet future eschatology, significance of miracles, allowance of divorce, celibacy, voluntary fasting, purity rules, and familial obligation.¹⁸⁷ *Pace* Meier, it will be shown that Jesus’ gospel of the Kingdom of God had nothing to do with any of these hypothetical disagreements; however, they do indicate that Jesus’ Hellenistic Judaism was up against traditional Judaism.

Clearly, there was much dialog going on in the Gospel accounts between Jesus and the Pharisees, both being depicted in the Gospels as competing teachers who verbally challenge one another critically. Accordingly, another possible scenario is, because Jesus knew a lot about the teachings of the Pharisees, then perhaps it could be that some sort of Pharisee had previously formally taught him. This may not have been in a school setting, but one more like Josephus’ learning experience with Banus, for three years, in the desert. Banus¹⁸⁸ was a colorful, celibate ascetic who wore no clothing except that which grew on trees, and who constantly took cold baths to “preserve his chastity.” After this long educational experience in the desert, Josephus claims that upon his return to civilization, he began to conduct himself according to the rules of the Pharisees. Clearly, Josephus was steeped in Platonic and Stoic philosophy.

¹⁸⁶ Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 3: 300.

¹⁸⁷ Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 3: 338.

¹⁸⁸ *Life* 2.11-12.

There was plenty of time for Jesus to encounter such a teacher because Jesus did not start his ministry until age thirty.¹⁸⁹ Josephus thus tells us that there were teachers of Jewish philosophy in the desert. Even so, the speculation that Jesus, like Josephus, was taught by a Banus-like teacher in the wilderness who knew Greek or Hellenized Jewish philosophy must also be discarded because of the lack of supporting evidence.

Jesus the *Synagōgē* Student

The most likely scenario is that Jesus was exposed to Jewish philosophical thinking in the *synagōgē* atmosphere. The Gospel of Luke seems to offer a major clue about the intellectual curiosity of Jesus: the twelve year old was said to have spent three days in the temple, or the temple court, at Jerusalem, hearing and questioning teachers and offering astonishing answers.¹⁹⁰ It can be determined from the New Testament alone that the Jerusalem temple and the *synagōgēs* in Palestine in the 1st century regularly invited speakers to discuss important issues, even if the speakers presented controversial, sometimes outrageous, topics and views. If Jesus visited the Jerusalem temple and Galilean *synagōgēs* beginning as a youth, and asked lots of questions, it seems very likely that he would have met a broad range of

¹⁸⁹ Luke 13:23.

¹⁹⁰ Luke 2:46.

speakers and teachers, almost certainly including some of the Hellenistic Jewish philosophical apologists that had been trained in Alexandria.¹⁹¹

What Jesus preached in every *synagōgē*, which was his gospel concerning the Kingdom of God, was certainly not mainstream, traditional Jewish thought that insisted on a literal interpretation of the Torah. Jesus was welcome in every *synagōgē*. There are multiple, extensive, positive statements in all four Gospel traditions about Jesus teaching his message concerning the Kingdom of God, in *all* of the *synagōgēs* throughout Galilee!¹⁹² If Jesus was able to go into virtually any *synagōgē*, anywhere, whenever he wanted, and teach or preach his unique gospel of the Kingdom of God, then we must conclude two things. The first is that Jesus' philosophy-based gospel was not radical to the Hellenized Jewish audience, but was welcome, informative, and enjoyable as a powerful alternate view to the traditional approach of the Pharisees, the teaching competitors of Jesus. Secondly, it must have been the custom of *synagōgēs*, in Galilee, in Jesus' time, to give a hearing to a wide range of speakers, hear them out, ask questions and discuss the subjects with them. It can also be assumed

¹⁹¹ E. R. Goodenough, in *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (13 vols.; New York: Pantheon, 1953-68), 1:180, says that Philo, who likely spoke only Greek, may have been an honored speaker in the *synagōgē* in Jerusalem during one of his trips there, and that his writings would not seem strange to members of the congregation..

¹⁹² Jesus having taught in all the *synagōgēs* is described in Mark 1:39; Matt 4:23, 9:35; Luke 4:44; John 6:59. Jesus teaching in individual *synagōgēs* is in Mark 1:21, 6:2, 12:35; Matt 9:35, 13:54, 26:55; John 6:59. Jesus' teaching in the temple is described in Mark 12:35, 14:49; Matt 21:31, 26:55; Luke 2:46, 19:47, 20:1, 21:37; John 7:14, 28, 8:20. Paul's teaching in the *synagōgēs* is in Acts 17:17, 18:4, 18:11, 18:26, 19:8, 28:31.

that the questions from the audiences were pointed and tough but that Jesus handled them well, in Galilee at least.

Pharisee teachers also taught in *synagōgēs*, although perhaps were not as welcome, nor as popular, as was Jesus.¹⁹³ Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God and how to enter it. The Pharisees taught against the Kingdom of God and forbade anyone to pursue the considerable effort to attempt to enter it.¹⁹⁴ This says that entering the kingdom of God was a voluntary effort and required a concentrated discipline and mental conditioning that could be discouraged or even thwarted by the Pharisees' teachings that *burden* the soul of a follower.¹⁹⁵ The Pharisees apparently were based in Jerusalem but occasionally, or perhaps even frequently, were allowed to teach in Galilean *synagōgēs*, even though they were not local inhabitants of the area.¹⁹⁶ Clearly, the Pharisees were teachers competitive to Jesus' teaching.

Recent studies have shown that the agenda and ritual of pre-70 *synagōgēs* in Palestine, were not similar to modern Jewish practice. In general,

¹⁹³ Luke 5:17; Matt 23:2, 23:7, 23:13-14.

¹⁹⁴ "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them" (Matt 23:13). For a more colorful version, consider "Jesus said, Damn the Pharisees, for they are like a dog sleeping in the cattle manger, for it does not eat or [let] the cattle eat" (Gos. Thom. 102, Meyer trans.)

¹⁹⁵ "They [the Pharisees] tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them" (Matt 23:4).

¹⁹⁶ Matt 12:38, 15:1; Luke 5:17, 11:43, 22:15. Horsley, *Archaeology, History and Society*, 152, argues against the veracity of Luke 5:17, saying that such verses reflect the later social role assigned to the Pharisees as "retainers of the temple in Jerusalem."

the term *synagōgē* referred to a collection of Jewish men, that is, a meeting rather than a building. In fact, there is only one clear statement in the Gospels of the *synagōgē* being a specific building.¹⁹⁷ Even so, archaeologists have only located a total of four pre-70 dedicated *synagōgē* buildings in all of Israel (Gamla, Masada, Magdala, and Herodium). Interestingly, none have a Torah shrine, which is characteristic of later (A.D. 2nd century and after) synagogues.¹⁹⁸ These “gatherings” were sometimes quite informal.¹⁹⁹

If scholars someday conclude that there were *no synagōgē* buildings in Galilee in Jesus’ time, this thesis would not suffer. Clearly, multiple traditions have Jesus teaching in a *synagōgē*, which may very well have been a meeting place at a predetermined location, public or private, enclosed or open. Indeed, philosophers of the Greek tradition had no cares whatsoever of venue for teaching. Socrates taught in the street, or even a drinking club; Plato in a garden; Zeno on a porch; Aristotle on a walkway. Jesus was said to have taught (1) in villages,²⁰⁰ which almost certainly did not have a dedicated building; (2) in cities²⁰¹ which might have had them; (3) in the vicinity of the court of the

¹⁹⁷ Luke 7:5. By the time that the Gospel of Luke was written, synagogue buildings and rituals were more common; hence, mention of this may be an anachronism.

¹⁹⁸ Howard Clark Kee and Lynn H. Cohick, eds., *Evolution of the Synagogue: Problems and Progress* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 1999), 23.

¹⁹⁹ Consider Mark 1:21-29, Luke 4:31-37.

²⁰⁰ Mark 6:6, 8:13; Matt 9:35; Luke 13:22, 23:5.

²⁰¹ Matt 9:35, 11:1; Luke 13:22.

Jerusalem Temple;²⁰² (4) in remote locations,²⁰³ even a mountaintop or by the sea; (5) in a prominent Pharisee's house;²⁰⁴ (6) and, in the finest tradition of Socrates, while strolling along.²⁰⁵

Philo says that the Sabbath meetings, in Alexandria anyway, were “wide open” and instructed people on “good sense, temperance, courage, justice, and all of the virtues.”²⁰⁶ Philo also quotes a scornful Egyptian official who describes the Jews who “sit in their little enclaves, gather your usual group, and in safety read your holy books, expounding anything that may not be clear, and with verbosity and no regard for time, *expatiating on your ancestral philosophy*.”²⁰⁷ Clearly, it was fair for someone to address the *synagōgē* on the Sabbath to discuss philosophy, as did Jesus. Given this fact, it is logical to conclude that any Jewish apologist – one who had been trained in a formal school, likely from Alexandria, to offer a defense of Jewish philosophy using allegorization of Scripture – would also have been welcome in virtually any *synagōgē* in Galilee. If so, then we have found a likely vehicle for Jesus to have become exposed to Jewish Hellenistic philosophy: he first heard it in the *synagōgē* that he attended

²⁰² Mark 11:18, 12:38, 14:49; Luke 19:47, 20:1, 21:23, 21:37, 22:33, 26:55.

²⁰³ Mark 6:34; Matt 5:1.

²⁰⁴ Luke 14:1-24.

²⁰⁵ Matt 17:22 (*sustrephō*).

²⁰⁶ *Spec.* 2.62.

²⁰⁷ *Somn.* 2.127. Emphasis mine.

regularly. It might have been in Sepphoris,²⁰⁸ or Nazareth, or anywhere in Galilee.

The questions now become: Where could Jesus have gotten the content of his Platonic message, and how he may have gotten it?

²⁰⁸ Chapter 4 will discuss current archaeological discoveries concerning Sepphoris.

CHAPTER 2

THE THEOLOGY OF PLATO

Method and Motivation for this Effort

A single treatise on Plato's philosophy as fitting the maxims of systematic theology has not previously been published. There are many works on Plato's religion, Socrates' religion, and Plato's concepts of Ideas, the Soul, Creation, and Reincarnation. In general, there have been two approaches to this area of investigation. The first method is to take a single concept, such as that of the soul, and analyze some or all of what Plato said about it.¹ The second technique has been to examine a selected few books of Plato's for theological content on a book-by-book basis.² Both of these general approaches are invariably

¹ See as examples Gregory Vlastos, *Plato's Universe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975); Nalin Ranasinghe, *The Soul of Socrates* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000); David B. Claus, *Toward the Soul: An Inquiry into the Meaning of ψυχή before Plato* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981); Francis Macdonald Cornford, trans., *Plato's Cosmology: The "Timaeus" of Plato Translated with a Running Commentary* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1937); Gail Fine, ed., *Plato 2: Ethics, Politics, Religion, and the Soul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Thomas More Robinson, *Plato's Psychology* (2nd ed; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

John D. Turner, *Sethian Gnosticism and the Platonic Tradition* (Sainte-Foy, Quebec: Les Presses de l'université Laval, 2001), thoroughly discusses several elements of Platonic theology; e.g., first principles, soul, and knowledge of God. These elements are then followed through the Middle Platonists and immediately to Sethian Gnosticism without mention of the Platonic theology inherent in the Gospels.

² See I. M. Crombie, *An Examination of Plato's Doctrines: Plato on Man and Society* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962); Friedrich Solmsen, *Plato's Theology* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1942; repr., New York: Johnson Reprints, 1967); Paul Elmer More, *The Religion of Plato* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921); Mark McPherran, *The Religion of Socrates* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996); Paul Shorey, *What Plato Said* (abridged ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933).

constructed to show either a unity of concept or a development of Plato's concepts from early to late stages in his writing career. These treatments, however, do not allow for use of the powerful tools of systematic theology; e.g., examination of deity, creation, and eschatology together to compare the beginning and end; analysis of anthropology, sin, and salvation together to determine exactly how humanity fits into the cosmic picture; and comparison of anthropology and eschatology together to understand theodicy better.

This chapter will present Plato's theology within the modern categories of a theological system that has been made popular by Christian apologists; that is, to show the unity of the Christian system.³ Accordingly, the areas of Deity, Creation, Anthropology/Sin, Salvation, and Eschatology are common for this effort. In the past, theologians have considered this systematic approach to be the exclusive science of Christian theology. However, it is clear that other religious systems can also be analyzed in this way. What Christian theologians would consider to be exclusive to the Christian system is the area of Christology; that is, the study of the particular divinity of Jesus Christ. Even so, while Platonism has neither a Christ nor a Christology *per se*, it indeed has a divine Reason or Mind that is comparable to the Christian divine *Logos*, through which all things were created. Furthermore, Platonism does not have a human Jesus, but does have a human Socrates. Comparisons between the lives and styles of

³ These systems, which are a categorization of theological concepts, are almost never without bias. Although the presented order commences with Deity, Anthropology, Sin, Salvation, Christology and Eschatology, the system is typically worked backwards and forwards from Christology.

Jesus and Socrates are plentiful, and profitable to read.⁴ However, what is invariably missing in these comparisons is the commonality of theological content between the two teachers. To address this problem, it first has to be determined just what Plato's theological system entailed. This, however, would easily become a scholar's life work because of what seem to be arguable conflicts between what Plato said in one book versus another. Plato obviously took multiple approaches to each of the theological areas, and these approaches do not always appear to be in concert. This thesis will not undertake the task of determining exactly what Plato's *primary* approach was to each theological area, while discarding all others. For such an effort, it would seem to be impossible to reach a consensus among scholars.

The task for this thesis, however, is made much simpler by considering that, in the few centuries just prior to the time of Jesus, the Hellenistic Jews poured over Plato's texts searching for evidence that justified their Jewish philosophy. Today, Bible scholars use the term 'proof-text' to connote using verses of scripture as proof, even when lifted out of context, but that is likely too rash a term for the Hellenistic Jews, such as Philo, who clearly dug deep for a better understanding of Plato's theological system. Even so, just because the later Hellenistic Jews performed an in-depth analysis of Plato's theology, it does not follow in the strict sense that they were what we term today as Middle

⁴ Joseph Priestly, *Jesus and Socrates Compared* (1800; repr., Kila, Montana: Kessinger, n.d.); Robert M. Wenley, *Socrates and Christ: A Study in the Philosophy of Religion* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1889); Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher*; Paul Gooch, *Reflections on Jesus and Socrates: Word and Silence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

Platonists, for little evidence can be found to indicate that they either bothered to defend Plato's thought or unify Plato's teachings, although they used selections of it in an intense manner.

Accordingly, it is not necessary to reach a consensus as to what Plato's theological system was; it is only necessary to understand Plato's various approaches. If Plato offered several approaches to a particular area, and if only one of them were satisfactory to the Hellenistic Jews, then that one was enough to show that they were compatible. The Hellenistic Jewish apologists could pick and chose whatever evidence they found fitting from Plato's concepts. The Greek's subsequent defense of the Hellenistic Jew's apologies, in such a case, could not be that Plato was inconsistent or wrong in areas, but only that a particular interpretation was invalid. The Hellenistic Jewish apologist's approach was straightforward: to look for support for Judaism in Plato's theology, and offer praise of Plato while keeping any "Plato is wrong" comments to an absolute minimum.

It is necessary, then, to set our minds to that of a Hellenistic Jewish apologist, and look at Plato's system in a systematic way that can be compared with, and used to justify, the theology of traditional Judaism. When viewed in this way, adjustments to traditional Judaism must be made in areas that are not critical, and expansions from the Jewish scriptures, including allegorical interpretations, are needed to explain away some of the differences. Plato has offered plenty of material, and sometimes more than one option of interpretation,

to make the task relatively straightforward. What the end result was, we can safely call the theology of Hellenistic Judaism.

Plato's Theological Summary Statement

The Allegory of the Cave in *Republic VII* offers a summary of summaries of Plato's theology. It is to be noted that this is a very carefully constructed allegory of human existence, not a myth, fable, or foreign story such as found in other places within Plato's works. To begin, there is **something divine** in the invisible, intelligible region, which is the author of light and the authentic source of truth and reason. Below, in the cave, **mankind** can be found in the darkness, happy with viewing and discussing the things that they think are real, that are actually shadows of images of images, for the multitude of humans exist in abject ignorance. There is a **savior** involved who drags one of the cave people, by force, up into the light, compelling him or her literally to turn, or undergo **conversion** of the mind and soul, to become enlightened by viewing the cosmos as it actually exists, to see the real truth and forever dispel the former acceptance of shadows of images of reality. The main theme of the Allegory of the Cave is **salvation** of the individual by creating virtues through habit and practice, educating the soul, learning about the divine reality, and obtaining the true wisdom that has undergone severe testing by questioning. An **eschatology** is described that involves the soul of the enlightened person being able to contemplate heaven itself. In addition, there is a very important **mission**

statement: the saved person, after being enlightened and educated, *must* return to the cave in attempt to enlighten others, even though he will be laughed at, jeered, hated, and likely even killed in his or her attempt to do so.⁵

As wonderful as Plato's summary is, it is not enough to know only this. Plato has described much more, in each of the systematic theological areas, within his many books. He has approached the subjects of theology from multiple angles, with details in each approach that sometimes seem to conflict with other approaches. He offers doctrines for consideration, but not dogmas. In all areas, there is more than one option to consider; for example, there are multiple approaches offered to aid in considering the existence of God, the existence of the human soul, the way of salvation, and the final end of the journey of the soul.

Plato's Divine World

Deity

The first element in a presentation of a systematic theology is usually entitled *God*. Indeed, Plato has much to say about what we modern interpreters call God. The principal Greek word for God is used 508 times in the works of Plato.⁶ It is important to realize that Plato did not attempt to name God, nor

⁵ *Resp.* 514A-518D, 520B-C. Plato's allegory of the descent of the savior into the darkness of the cave has been related to Jesus' descent into the flesh of his body by Clement of Alexandria in *Strom.* 5.14.108.1-3 and 5.14.105.2-4. See also Jean Daniélou, *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture* (trans. John Austin Baker, Philadelphia: Westminster, 1973), 126-27.

⁶ *Perseus 2.0: Interactive Sources and Studies on Ancient Greece* on CD-ROM (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), lists 133 θεός, 193 θεός, 105 θεοῦ, and 77 θεῶ for the singular

personify God into a knowable, recognizable being in the anthropomorphic sense similar to the person of Yahweh in the Old Testament. Yet, Plato has more than one way of talking about the divine. To begin, it is first necessary to realize that Plato recognized two "worlds" in his theology: that which is visible to us and recognized through our five senses and that which is invisible and recognized only through our powers of reason and intelligence.⁷ The terms used herein will be the sensual world and the intelligible world. All of that which Plato calls divine is within the intelligible world.

In his books, Plato does not attempt to define God, but nevertheless discusses three major terms of the divine,⁸ that of the Ideas, the Reason that acted as a craftsman, or demiurge, during creation, and the Soul, all three considered to be either aspects of a single divine Being, or, at the least, unified, divine beings with the same mind, intelligence, and goodness.⁹ All of these aspects are to be discussed in this section. The fact that Plato nowhere shows any competition or disharmony between any of his divine beings allows for the easy conclusion that Plato was basically a monotheist. Plato did hypostatize these aspects, and to some extent did personalize them by calling them good,

noun. There are also 768 uses of the plural. Crombie, *Examination of Plato's Doctrines*, 371, explains that the plural may be Plato's "willingness to comply with customary polytheistic language." Crombie cites *Leg.* 900-905 as an example where Plato used god and gods interchangeably when speaking about the divine government of the universe.

⁷ *Phaed.* 79B; *Resp.* 508A-B, 509D-E, 517B, 532A-B.

⁸ The term "parts" must not be used: it would imply that God is divisible. That God is indivisible, see *Parm.* 137C; *Soph.* 245B.

⁹ Later, Clement of Alexandria and others will use this "threefold division of reality" (*Strom.* 5.14) as a proof-text for the sovereignty of the Christian Trinity.

just, righteous, etc.¹⁰ Plato did not attempt to explain how these divine beings interplayed with each other, or what their division of authorities and responsibilities were, but he did say that these three aspects were unified, and that God (*Dios*), like a king, possessed a kingly soul (*psychē*) and a kingly mind (*nous*) that ruled the universe, with kingly power (*dynamis*).¹¹ Plato is clear that the entire universe is under the power of a single divine, ordering intelligence,¹² termed “the One,” which is a unification of all transcendence and all divine being.

In order to attempt to understand the common philosophy and theology of the time of Jesus, it is necessary that we look at the Platonism advocated by the so-called Middle Platonists who were very active in Hellenistic times and places. These Middle Platonists had well worked-out teachings of the aforementioned three aspects of God: Ideas, Reason, and Soul. In regard to Plato’s Ideas, which will be discussed in more detail shortly, it first must be explained that the Idea of the Good is chief among all Ideas,¹³ and this Idea actually transcends all being; that is, the Idea of the Good alone is beyond all essence and, for that matter, transcends all descriptions of transcendence. The Good, then, according to Plato’s *Republic*, seems to connote a Supreme Being, or whatever can be said to be above and beyond being, but certainly over and above all other beings, divine

¹⁰ For attributes of God’s goodness see *Leg.* 901D; *Resp.* 379A-B; *Theaet.* 176C; *Tim.* 29E.

¹¹ *Phileb.* 30D. Plato often used *Dios*, or Zeus, to mean God.

¹² *Parm.* 137C; 142C; *Crat.* 400A; [*Alc. Maj.*] 133C.

¹³ *Resp.* 509B.

or mortal. The point here is that the Middle Platonists and the early Church Fathers seized on this concept of Plato's as describing God the Father and Maker of All.¹⁴ Accordingly, as Eusebius recorded it, Plato's trinity for the Middle Platonist was the Good, the Mind (*Nous*), and the Soul.¹⁵ The Good, then, is the supreme Idea, fully transcendent and beyond. The Mind, or Reason, is the mind of God, the active force and power that brought about creation, not dissimilar from that later called the divine *Logos* by the Middle Platonists, both terms connoting the reasoning functions of God. Although the Soul is the life force within us, and within all active, moving elements of the universe, it is much more: it is the individual's share of the intelligible, invisible divine being. Each of the three aspects of the divine will be discussed in depth herein. What also is profitable to keep in view is how the Middle Platonists understood this system. An example is Philo of Alexandria, who used Plato's *Timaeus* together with the Septuagint to result in a creation story acceptable to Greek and Jew alike, replete with references to Soul, Divine Reason/Intellect, and Ideas of God.¹⁶ The aforementioned triad of Ideas, Mind, and Soul might also trigger what the later Christians, especially Gregory of Nyssa, would recognize in Plato's work as the

¹⁴ More, *Religion of Plato*, 119-20, says it is a serious, yet common, error to equate God to the Ideas of Plato, which would make God an abstraction that could not be the maker and father of the world. A second serious error, says More, is to deny personality to the aspects of Plato's God, who is good, just, etc.

¹⁵ Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 11.20.

¹⁶ See Philo, *Opif.* 1-6, especially, but throughout.

Blessed Trinity: the transcendent Father, the transcendent and immanent creator Son, the immanent Spirit that moves in the world.

Plato's theological task of addressing the dilemma of the transcendence and immanence of God was both huge and difficult; it was the harbinger of all such theological problems continuing to this present day, and Plato offered the prototype solution. One horn of the dilemma is that God, if perfect, cannot change. If God were perfect, yet did change, then God would no longer be perfect.¹⁷ This means that God cannot be changeable or mutable, cannot consist of material subject to wear, rot or other corruption, and cannot emit any part or portion that would in any way be diminishing.¹⁸ God, who cannot be material, has to be completely out of the material world. That is, God has to transcend the material universe.

The other horn of the dilemma is that somehow God had to create the universe, and, in most religious systems, has to have a say in running it. This demands an immanent God who creates or changes the universe at will, listens to prayers from creatures with reason, promotes justice by somehow punishing wrongdoers, and perhaps even carries out a plan for the eventual end of the corruptible, material world.

¹⁷ *Resp.* 381B-C, 382E; Aristotle *Metaph.* 1074B.

¹⁸ *Resp.* 379A; 380D; 381B-E; 382E-383A; *Pol.* 269D.

This answer to the dilemma is not entirely original with Plato, but is a continuation of Anaxagoras' older, well known, concept of divine Mind.¹⁹ It centers on the fact that God has a mind and can think and reason without incurring an iota of diminishment. Furthermore, when God thinks, things happen. God's reason can bring order to the disorderly matter in the universe, and thus create. Conversely, as we shall see, the recognition of order in the universe, especially that of the starry heavens, is a proof, for Plato, of a divine Mind.

The solution of the demand for divine immanence is also not particularly original with Plato.²⁰ God's Mind created a big batch of divine *soul* and arranged to get some of it to each reasonable creature. This essence of soul that is within each human being, or each being capable of experiencing control by internal reason, is divine itself, and, by the intrinsic nature of one of *soul's* ingredients, is what causes motion in our bodies. This little piece of divinity in us, and the influence on it by the *Logos*, is what constitutes immanence in the world. After the creation of all souls, but before commencing to implant each individual soul into the embryo of a human body, God had each soul, or an aggregate of all souls, view the Ideas, and it is this ever-so-faint remembrance of this original

¹⁹ See Fr. 12 of Simplicius' *In Phys.* 164.24 and 156.13, in G. S. Kirk, J.E. Raven, and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 362-64. Anaxagoras describes Mind as infinite, self-ruled, unmixed, alone, the finest and purist, the initiator, arranger, and controller of all things and their motion, including the rotation of the stars, sun, moon, and *aither*.

²⁰ The concept of the soul had been well developed prior to Plato's time by Pythagorean and Orphic sources, of which most that is known was recorded by Plato. See *Gorg.* 493A. See Claus, *Toward the Soul*, 111-21.

view of Ideas from those halcyon events that instigates the soul to strive to get back to its origins.²¹

Ideas or Forms

The overwhelming creativity of Plato is that he brought together the three aspects of the divine. Granted, the concepts of the Mind as transcendent creator and the Soul as God's immanent ambassador to all reasonable bodies were not original with Plato, but the combination seems to be. Because Mind is continually thinking, its formulation presses the limit of the definition of transcendence, for Mind can change, and thought seems to be capable of change. What was needed in Plato's theology was a divinity that is absolute, unchanging, and everlasting. The analogy Plato used is that of the builder, the architect and the model, or drawing, or perhaps plan, as we might say in the modern world.²² Clearly, there is a hierarchy involved, for the builder must be subordinate to the drawing, and the drawing to the architect during the interval that the architect is making the drawing. The expert architect constructs the drawing, or model, and then goes about other business. This model remains fixed, never changing, and always perfect.²³ Nor can anyone or anything, even the Supreme Being it seems,

²¹ *Leg.* 899D-E; *Tim.* 42C-D; *Symp.* 211C.

²² See *Resp.* 579A for the example of the cabinet maker. See *Crat.* 389C for the example of the shuttle or garment maker.

²³ *Resp.* 380D, 478E, 479E, 500C; *Crat.* 439D-E; *Soph.* 248A; *Symp.* 211A-C, E; *Phaed.* 78D; 79A; *Tim.* 52A. Simply put, no later drawing changes, for whatever reason, are allowed, even by the architect, because the drawings (Ideas) are eternal and unchanging.

tamper with, change or wear out the model. Prior to the generation of the model is the thought of how it will look. Ideas are also called Forms (*eidas*, or look, aspect), implying an analogy with something that a molder would use who molds the models.

Plato conditions the concept of the Forms as models or molds with the assurance that they never are susceptible to any workman using them directly. To prevent their direct usage, and maintain the absolute integrity of the Forms, a copy is made by the creative Reason. As a result, the natural beauty that we see in this world is a copy of the original, inferior to true beauty for most things but with certain exceptions.²⁴ The exceptions are that a person can witness the earthly copies of justice and temperance, among other Ideas, which have the appearance of beauty that may be Beauty itself.²⁵ More will be said about copies of the Ideas in the Creation section of this chapter. Any painting or art that we may admire is but a copy of a copy of true reality. Thus the Middle Platonists agreed with Plato, saying that: God produces the Idea, Reason (the demiurge) makes a copy, and the painter imitates the copy.²⁶

From Aristotle on, Platonists had to deal with what Plato meant by the Ideas as whether or not they were the thoughts of God. The difficult statement in *Timaeus* concerning the *Absolute Living Creature* that involves the Ideas as

²⁴ *Tim.* 28B.

²⁵ *Phaedr.* 250B-D.

²⁶ *Resp.* 597B, D-E; *Tim.* 48E-49A.

operated on by Reason (*Nous*) is most often cited as implying God as being Ideas and Reason.²⁷ Aristotle worked with this concept, considering that Mind (*Nous*) must think, or "If Mind thinks nothing, where is its dignity?"²⁸ Finally, Aristotle concludes, "Therefore Mind thinks itself, if it is that which is best; and its thinking is a thinking of thinking (*noēsis noēseōs noēsis*)."²⁹ This may sound trivial to modern scholars, concluding that Mind can think. However, it was very important to work out the concept of divine immanence for a fully transcendent God, without allowing for movement or change. Plato had not fully worked out the problem, but his student Aristotle did.

By Philo's time, the Ideas were considered as the thoughts of God without proof. The earliest definitive statement of this by a Platonist was that of Alcinous in the mid 2nd century, who said: "Form is considered in relation to God, his thinking . . . whether God is an Intellect or is possessed of intellect, he has thoughts, and these are eternal and unchanging; and if this is the case, Forms exist."³⁰ Roger Miller Jones says that Platonists knew this all along, though, "There are many considerations which make it probable that the theory that the

²⁷ *Tim.* 39E.

²⁸ *Metaph.* 12, 1074B (Tredennick & Armstrong, LCL). See here Aristotle's careful working of the concepts of transcendence, immanence, and immutability of Mind: "Clearly, then, it thinks that which is most divine and estimable, and does not change, for the change would be for the worse, and anything of this kind would immediately imply some kind of motion."

²⁹ *Metaph.* 12, 1074B.

³⁰ John Dillon, trans., *Alcinous: Handbook of Platonism*, 9.1,3. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 16.

Ideas and God are not independent realities came into existence in the Academy at an early period, apart from Stoic and neo-Pythagorean influences."³¹

Even so, it is important not to think of the Ideas as ongoing thoughts of God, for they are absolute beings, unchanging.³² It seems valid to look at them as patterns established in a permanent medium such as blueprints; that is, a static, unchanging aspect of God. Ideas are products of Reason, the Mind of God, yet are co-eternal and fixed. One explanation is that God's Reason thought the Ideas before the creation of time,³³ thus satisfying the definition of eternal. God's ongoing thoughts, however, after the creation of time, are the means for God getting things done; that is, Reason is the dynamic aspect of God.

The Forms that Plato describes are primarily that of Good and Beauty, and he says less about the Forms Justice, Equality, Temperance, Knowledge, and mathematics/astronomy.³⁴ As discussed above, the Form of the Good heads up all other Forms. Every person seeks, and each soul pursues the reality of the Good.³⁵ It is possible for the soul to know the Form of the Good through increase in knowledge. In that way, since we strive for the Good, then the Good is the

³¹ Roger Miller Jones, "The Ideas and the Thoughts of God," *CP* 21 (1926): 324.

³² Paul Shorey, *The Unity of Plato's Thought* (Chicago: Chicago Press, 1903), 30, 37, says that Aristotle and most of the later Platonists fell into a trap by thinking that Ideas were thoughts of God, which was not Plato's doctrine: "On the contrary, God uses them as patterns and as elements in the creation of the soul."

³³ See *Tim.* 37E-38A for the creation of time.

³⁴ *Phaedr.* 247D. There are many more Forms, seemingly an infinite number.

³⁵ *Resp.* 505E.

cause of our striving, and hence is the cause of our desire for knowledge.³⁶ We do not know much detail about the Form of the Good, for when asked, Socrates wisely refused to attempt to define it or its nature.³⁷ One of the Forms is that of absolute Beauty, the prototype pattern of patterns for all other visions of beauty in the universe. Each of the Forms is one, unified, and existing by itself, without its existence dependent on any other Form except that of the Good, or on anything else. Yet, the Forms are in communion with each other, and may seem interrelated. All Forms are good and have their good essence derived, somehow, from the Idea of the Good.³⁸ A person's ultimate reward is to have his or her soul someday gaze on the Forms; of particular pleasure is that of seeing Beauty. In order to gaze leisurely on the Forms, provided we have lived a just life, our soul must first be separated from its body. It is possible, however, for the souls of living human beings, with great difficulty, to get a peek at the Forms for a short time. How to see the Forms rightly belongs in the Salvation section of this chapter, and will be covered there in detail. Meanwhile, a hint will suffice: the "easiest" (for it is hardly easy) and most risky way to Heaven is to pursue beauty diligently, aided by Eros, our creative drive, up the ladder of love to Beauty itself

³⁶ *Resp.* 505E, 508E, 509A, 523A, 532B; *Soph.* 248A; *Tim.* 28A.

³⁷ *Resp.* 506E.

³⁸ *Resp.* 476A. For the derivation of the goodness from the Idea of the Good, see *Resp.* 509B.

by the method described in the *Symposium*.³⁹ There also are others, but the most seductive way to get to Heaven is by the pursuit of Love and Beauty.

Mind

Divine Mind (*Nous*) is the same as divine Reason, in Plato's system. Reason demands order, and the need for order drives creation. Having separated out the Ideas, the fully transcendental aspect of God from the concept of Mind that was attributed to Anaxagoras, Plato becomes free to describe Mind as the active aspect of all creation without much concern for justifying the potential paradox of the action and motion involved.⁴⁰ Even so, Plato would not allow Mind itself to be in motion, but only to cause motion and thus to cause everything.⁴¹ One criteria that is necessary in order for Mind to order the universe is for each ordered creature to possess soul. Soul is that little piece of divinity within us and all orderly bodies that is capable of animating, ordering, and controlling the human body, and as such is always in motion. But Plato's paradigm for orderly motion is the movement of the planets and stars, thus the stars and planets must have souls in order for divine Reason to work within

³⁹ *Symp.* 211B-C.

⁴⁰ More, *Religion of Plato*, 210, considers Plato's separation of Ideas and Mind to be "an embarrassment that haunts the whole doctrine of Ideas." Surely, says More, there is goodness in God's Mind, and how is that different from Goodness itself?

⁴¹ See *Phileb.* 30D for Mind being the cause of all. See *Leg.* 894B for the motion that moves all but cannot move itself. *Leg.* 895B describes the priority of the unmoved motion.

them.⁴² Plato states that it is critical for humans to be educated in, to accept, and to understand the two dogmas involved here: that of the immortal soul, the first thing created, that rules over all bodies and that of the Reason, or Mind, that controls what exists among the stars.⁴³

Logos

Plato uses the word *logos* in several ways, usually as an element of dialectic. It almost never means "a word." It is closely associated with human reason and can mean a discussion, an argument, or a summation, justification, or accounting of a concept. In several places Plato says that *logos* is equivalent to knowledge, including divine knowledge and the means of apprehending it.⁴⁴ It also is the *process* by which divine knowledge, using reason, is obtained.⁴⁵ For Socrates, *logos* was the means to salvation through continuous dialectical inquiry searching for the true meaning of virtue.⁴⁶ Thought and *logos* are the same, says Plato, except that thought is the soul in communication with itself.⁴⁷

⁴² *Leg.* 875C, 897B-C. This is an improvement on Anaxagoras' system, where the stars were soulless. See also *Leg.* 967B.

⁴³ *Leg.* 967D. *Phileb.* 28C, 30D. "All philosophers agree - Mind is king of heaven and earth" (LCL). For an earlier notion of divine Mind (*Nous*) as omnipotent, omniscient, and infinite, the initiator of motion that rules and controls all, see "Anaxagoras" in Kirk, Raven and Schofield, *Presocratic*, #476-79, which cites Simplicius' *In Phys.* 35.14, 156.13, 157.7, 164.24, and 300.31.

⁴⁴ *Phaed.* 73A, 76B, 78D; *Resp.* 534A-B; *Tim.* 28A; *Symp.* 202A; *Soph.* 253B.

⁴⁵ *Theaet.* 186D. See Alexander Nehamas, *Virtues of Authenticity: Essays on Plato and Socrates* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 224-48.

⁴⁶ Paul Friedländer, in *Plato: An Introduction* (trans. Hans Meyerhoff, 2nd rev. ed.; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 12, 63, capitalizes Socrates' *Logos* to imply a close

Middle Platonists conflated the *logos* with the Mind, or Reason of God, justified by Plato's passages such as the following:

Athenian: If, my good sir, we are to assert that the whole course and motion of Heaven and of all it contains have a motion like to the motion and revolution and reckonings of reason (*logismoi*) and proceed in a kindred manner, then clearly we must assert that the best soul regulates the whole cosmos and drives it on its course
....⁴⁸

διὰ δὴ τὸν λογισμὸν τόνδε νοῦν μὲν ἐν ψυχῇ, ψυχὴν δὲ ἐν σώματι
ξυνιστάς τὸ πᾶν ξυνετρεκταίνεται (So because of this reflection, He
constructed reason (*nous*) within soul and soul within body as He
fashioned the All)⁴⁹

The conflation between the thoughts (*nous*) of God and the speech (*logos*) of God seems natural enough. Although speech is an overt action, where thought is covert, both reflect thought. Plato occasionally changed his terminology, such as using *logos* as Reason instead of *nous*.⁵⁰ Plato sometimes changed his terminology in a non-systematic way, especially in the later dialogues, and especially when talking about otherwise inexpressible concepts.⁵¹ It is to be

connection between the reason of Socrates and divine Reason. Central to Friedländer's argument is *Phaed.* 99E, where Socrates realizes that divine knowledge cannot come via the senses, but only through the *logos*, "εἰς τοὺς λόγους καταφυγόντα ἐν ἐκείνοις σκοπεῖν τῶν ὄντων τὴν ἀληθειαν" Friedländer (108) argues that Socrates and Plato were quite familiar with the *Logos* of Heraclites, who used *logos* as both the divine words and the eternal law of the cosmos that the divine words convey. Plato, Friedländer says, purposely related human *logos*, or dialectic investigation via reason, to the divine *Logos* in passages such as *Phaed.* 99E.

⁴⁷ *Theaet.* 190A; *Soph.* 263E.

⁴⁸ *Leg.* 897C (Bury, LCL).

⁴⁹ *Tim.* 30B (Bury, LCL).

⁵⁰ E.g. *Soph.* 265C.

⁵¹ See Shorey, *Unity*, 37, for an explanation of Plato's change in terminology as a means to avoid the associated technicalities that may cloud the intended meaning of the passages.

noted that in the *Timaeus*, the creation of the gods and the divine soul occurs when the Reason of God speaks.⁵² As discussed above, having a divinity speak pushes further the limits of the definition of transcendence, for “nothing can go out from God.”⁵³ Plato, then, drew the limit line for transcendence at the concept of the unmoved mover, Mind, who gets things done by thought. In a very few places, however, Plato described creation by the transcendent Being as executed by the act of speaking. The Hellenistic Jews, when they found Plato's divine Reason creating by speaking, *Ταῦτ' εἶπε*, and compared it to their own divine God as written in the Septuagint Genesis, that is, *Καὶ εἶπεν*, they knew they had a match between Jewish and Greek thinking concerning creation. What they more likely had was a Septuagint that was made by translators who were familiar enough with Plato's *Timaeus* to use its terminology in several places.

In addition to linking *Logos* to God's creating, Plato also associated *Logos* with the act of a divine interpreter and messenger of God to humankind, as carried out by Hermes.⁵⁴

Proofs of the Existence of God

Plato offers several proofs of God's existence, all on a philosophic basis, that have more appeal to an atheist or agnostic than would modern Christian

⁵² *Tim.* 41A, D.

⁵³ *Resp.* 380D-E. cf. *Tim.* 50B, where absolute Ideas, such as the triangle, change just by talking about them or observing them. However, the criteria in *Crat.* 439E of remaining in the same state and not moving seems to be satisfied even if God speaks.

⁵⁴ *Crat.* 407E-408B.

attempts that depend on divine revelation. Although all of the proofs have minor flaws in their premises, it is to be concluded that Plato tried very hard, and from different approaches, to prove what is key to his, or any, theological system. The proofs will be presented in order of their quality, with the poorest first.

Argument by Analogy to Humans

The basic and fundamental approach to the concept of Supreme Deity is that of Plato's analogy of the mind of a human to the Mind of God; of a human soul to the Soul of the Universe; and of human reason to divine Reason.⁵⁵ This set of analogies is important because it sets up a basic intellectual anthropomorphism that quickly became the norm, and is dominant yet today. The analogy of the human mind to the Mind of God is obvious by the language itself: mind, reason, idea – all anthropomorphic, yet all within the invisible, intellectual, immaterial world.⁵⁶

An argument can be found in the *Philebus* between Socrates and Protarchus that uses a concatenation of approaches, including an analogy between humans and God. It starts with an attempted argument by cause; that is, the statement that everything that comes into being requires a cause and a

⁵⁵ The Hellenistic Jews and the later Christians would add the Word of God to the anthropomorphism.

⁵⁶ Note that the anthropomorphism is between the *invisible* aspects of humans to that of God; that is, intelligence, thinking, memory, etc. of the intelligible world. Later, the Greeks would sharply criticize and ridicule Jewish scripture that described God's fingers, hands, feet, etc.; that is, *visible* body parts that could be seen by the sensual world.

creative agent.⁵⁷ This approach fades and the approach shifts to the concept of a divine Mind that orders all. This approach also seems to go nowhere. Changing tack again, Socrates gets Protarchus to agree that the body has a soul, and by analogy, so must the universe. Socrates then begins yet another approach that says because the human mind can cause the body to act, it must contain the cause, which is one of the four known elements (the finite, the infinite, the combination, and the cause). The conclusion is reached that the heavens must have all four elements in pure states, but this is quickly abandoned. Next is the agreement that whatever orders seasons and months must most justly be called wisdom and mind, and, because soul accompanies reason and mind, it too must be included. Socrates now backtracks to the agreement that Mind rules the universe, and concludes that, because of this, divine Mind has to be the cause of all. Furthermore, since divine Mind, the cause, belongs to that class of the aforementioned elements, then divine Mind, "by itself, has not and never will have either beginning or middle or end."⁵⁸

A further analogy appears in *Alcibiades I*, where Plato discusses the eye, or actually its pupil, which reflects the image of another eye looking at it. He relates the human eye to the human soul, saying that to know itself, our soul must look at another soul, in particular, the other soul's wisdom. After agreeing that no part of the soul is more divine than that which is the seat of knowledge

⁵⁷ *Phileb.* 26E-27A.

⁵⁸ *Phileb.* 28C-31A. The quote is from 31A (Fowler & Lamb, LCL). See also More, *Religion of Plato*, 116-17, and esp. 123, "God is to the universe what the soul is to man."

and thought, Socrates concludes that the wisdom of the soul resembles God, and when one comes to know the best knowledge of their own soul, to “know thyself,” then he or she will possess divine knowledge.⁵⁹

Argument by Intelligent Design

Xenophon, a close associate of Socrates, reports that he overheard a conversation between Socrates and Euthydemus concerning how the gods have taken great care to give mankind *exactly* what it needs: the Sun for light, warmth, and agriculture; seasons, domesticated animals, fire, and water.⁶⁰ Xenophon also recalls a similar conversation between Socrates and Aristodemus concerning the creator’s gift of eyes, ears, brows, teeth, etc., and concludes that these signs of forethought are clearly proof of design, not chance.⁶¹ Implicit in these discussions is the complementary statement that if the gods do all these things solely for the sake of mankind, then surely the gods exist as proved by their gifts.

In the *Republic*, Plato argues that the heavens show a grand design in the best possible manner, the fairest and most exact of material things; yet, they are

⁵⁹ [*Alc. Maj.*] 132D-133C. Cf. *Tim.* 46D for the relation between divine soul of the universe and the human soul.

⁶⁰ Xenophon, *Mem.* 4.3.1-19. McPherran, *Religion of Socrates*, 272-73, seems to have successfully separated Socratic religion from that of Plato.

⁶¹ *Mem.* 1.4.1-7. See McPherran, *Religion of Socrates*, 274, for a structured argument of this proof that “an intelligent designer-creator of the cosmos exists.”

only patterns to use to develop mathematics, which is absolute and true. The heavens thus serve mankind as a teaching aid.⁶²

Argument by Motion

One of the two best arguments from Plato proving both God's and the soul's existence is found in Book 10 of the *Laws*. It commences with a humorous, ironic prayer to the gods that they "be invoked with all zeal to aid in the demonstration of their own existence."⁶³ The argument begins when the Athenian Stranger and Clinias name ten kinds of motion, with the last and most excellent kind agreed to be that which is able to move other things and yet able to move itself. This tenth type, the self-moving, is quickly reckoned to be the prime cause of all movement, and to be incorruptible.⁶⁴ Next comes the observation that things that have soul are alive and move, thus the soul is self-moving and is "identical with the prime origin and motion of what is, has been, and shall be ... the cause of all change and motion in things."⁶⁵ Their next agreement is that the soul is the oldest of things because it is the first principle of motion. The argument concludes by noting that whatever drives around the Sun and stars,

⁶² *Resp.* 529A-530C. See More, *Religion of Plato*, 111.

⁶³ *Leg.* 893B.

⁶⁴ *Leg.* 894B-C.

⁶⁵ *Leg.* 896A (Bury, LCL). Cf. *Metaph.* 1071B-1072B. More, *Religion of Plato*, 110, says that of the three major arguments for the existence of God (from design; from intuition or the universality of belief; from the nature of the soul), this is the one on which Plato rests his case.

which themselves have souls, has to be good, and each of the heavenly bodies has to be regarded as a god.⁶⁶

Argument by Divine Order

The best, and simplest, argument seems to be that of *Phaedo*, which was previously given by Anaxagoras,⁶⁷ that the divine Mind arranges and causes all things. This is an expansion and improvement of the argument by Intelligent Design, as described above. Thus, by simply observing the stars and planets, one can appreciate the order involved in their rotation about some center, assumed to be earth. Plato also mentions this doctrine of Anaxagoras in *Cratylus*⁶⁸ This cosmic order, however, is not perfect, as is evidenced by its visibility, for true knowledge cannot be seen by everyone. In addition, the paths of the bodies of the stars, like those of humans, are subject to deviations and change over seasons and years.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ *Leg.* 899B-E. The argument involves a tautology in the definition of the self-moving motion; that is, once the existence of a self-moving-without- itself- moving motion is accepted, the existence of God is accepted, for they are the same thing.

⁶⁷ *Phaed.* 97B-98B. Cf. *Phileb.* 30A-31A. See also Fragment 12 of Simplicius' *In Phys.* 156.13 and 164.24, in Kirk, Raven & Schofield, *Presocratics*, #476.

⁶⁸ *Crat.* 400A-B. Cf. *Soph.* 248E-249A; *Tim.* 30A.

⁶⁹ *Resp.* 529B-530C. Plato also adds that the study of geometry and astronomy can help us understand the divine order. Cf. *Tim.* 47A; *Leg.* 821B-822C.

Creation

In order to understand the third major aspect of Plato's concept of the divine nature, the soul, it is first necessary to know how the soul came to exist. Essentially, the soul and the universe were created by Reason, or Mind, acting to form the universe as a craftsman (*demiurge*) forms furniture, using the fixed Ideas as blueprints.⁷⁰ Remember that Reason formed the universe by thought, not overt action, by ordering disorderly, chaotic "stuff" around. The word *matter* must be avoided here because the "stuff" is pre-matter.

Technically, Reason did not create *ex nihilo* in one single action, because the discordant "stuff" was already in existence, being an eternal Idea of a special kind. That is, creation in the *Timaeus* involved Reason forming the "stuff" that was already there. Even so, it is nevertheless critically important to understand that by no means did Reason form matter that was foreign to the divine realm or that had been previously formed by another deity. If only Plato's explanation is considered, then creation *ex nihilo* by Reason cannot be claimed because Plato did not explicitly define the Ideas to be the eternal thoughts of Reason, and did not define Reason and the Ideas to be part of one unity, God, although that was

⁷⁰ The forming of the universe by the craftsman with his eyes on the eternal Ideas is found in *Resp.* 596B; *Tim.* 28B, 29A; 39E-40A. The analogy of the cabinet maker using a model is also found in *Resp.* 597A. That God made the soul first is found in *Leg.* 892A-C; *Tim.* 34C. That things are created by divine Reason (*logos*) "through God's workmanship" is stated in *Soph.* 265C-E (Fowler, LCL). Cf. Nicholas P. White, trans., "Sophist," in *Complete Works: Plato* (ed. John M. Cooper; Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 290, "divine expertise produces the things that come about by so-called nature."

one possible valid interpretation. Later, however, the Middle Platonists considered that the Ideas were indeed the eternal thoughts of Reason, and that the “stuff” that was available to be formed in creation was itself a divine Idea, albeit of a special kind, that had to have been previously created by Reason. Accordingly, the Middle Platonists could consider creation as a two-step process by a unified deity and further consider creation to be *ex nihilo* in that it resulted from a total absence of matter. That is, the “stuff” was created *ex nihilo* by Reason in the first step and Reason formed the universe from this “stuff” in the second step. Further, because the Middle Platonists considered both Reason and the Ideas to be the thoughts of God, they were able to say that the one God had created the universe *ex nihilo* by a two-step process.

It also is important to understand that although Plato had a personified Reason that acted in a way analogous to that of a *demiurge* (craftsman), he did not mean that an independent God was responsible for creation, although it is true that a partial, unstudied, reading of *Timaeus* 41 might give that impression.

⁷¹ For example, the implied demiurge is said to be framer and father,⁷² who sows the divine, immortal seeds and gives them origin,⁷³ who speaks and the souls are

⁷¹ The personification of Plato's demiurge as creator of the universe, modifying and renaming the entity Ialdabaoth, is a later Gnostic concept. See Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis* (trans. Robert McLachlan Wilson; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1983) 74-80, for examples of Gnostic concepts of the Demiurge, who combined with Unreason (*aponoia*) and became evil, or at least, ambivalent, imperfect, and ignorant.

⁷² *Tim.* 41A.

⁷³ *Tim.* 41D.

created, who sets the laws of the universe.⁷⁴ However, the creator is Mind, or Reason (*Nous*), as Plato reminds us in the *Timaeus* from time to time, both before and after the creation description. Plato only meant to say that divine Reason *acts* as a craftsman does in the making of an object according to a model. A careful reading will show that before the metaphor of the demiurge as creator of the universe is introduced in *Timaeus* 40C, Plato says it is Reason (*Nous*) that perceived the Ideas and made the copy thereof.⁷⁵ Clearly, the creator of the universe is actually not a simple demiurge, or craftsman like Plato's local demiurge furniture maker by name of Leochares.⁷⁶ Even so, Plato finds it convenient for the reader to consider that the divine Reason functioned in a manner similar to that of a craftsman when the universe was formed. A craftsman, in Greek practice, is a carpenter or stoneworker who works with wood or stone to form and shape it into a desired object, based on either an idea of his or a pattern or mold of some sort. The key things to know in this metaphor are that (1) a craftsman of furniture works from a model, and so did Reason, with the model being the divine Ideas, and (2) the craftsman does not create materials, but manipulates, cuts, and forms existing material to achieve the shape desired; divine Reason does not "create" material either, but transforms, forms, and shapes it into the desired objects. After the craftsman metaphor is complete, in

⁷⁴ *Tim.* 42D. Solmsen, *Plato's Theology*, 110, says that Plato is not dogmatic about the existence of the divine Demiurge, and says very little about it other than the fact of its goodness.

⁷⁵ *Tim.* 39E.

⁷⁶ *Ep.* 13.361B. Although many scholars consider this letter as not having been written by Plato himself, the use of the demiurge term for a local craftsman seems appropriate.

Timaeus 47E, Plato summarizes the status of the discussion of creation, saying that the prior discourse has been an exposition of the craftsmanship of Reason (Nous), that is: ἐπιδέδεικται τὰ διὰ νοῦ δεδημιουργημένα.⁷⁷ It should be abundantly clear here that Plato has not introduced a creator-god, and it would be a major mistake to think so.⁷⁸ Rather, Plato is saying that the Reason, or Mind, or Intellect, or Thought, or Word – all equivalent, interchangeable terms - of the Divine is the active, dynamic aspect that performs the creation, using thought to transform, arrange and order the necessary “stuff” to be used.

As to what the “stuff” is that Reason brought to order for the creation, Socrates admits that he is undertaking a great task to explain it, and that all he can give is a “likely” account.⁷⁹ The “stuff” Socrates calls Space, Receptacle, Necessity, Mother, or even the Nurse of all Becoming. Understanding this is very important for two reasons: (1) it is the *transformed* Mother and Receptacle of the generated world that is the matter that we can now sense; that is, although invisible in its uncontrolled original state, it can become visible when controlled,⁸⁰ and (2) this “stuff” is part of the makeup of the soul, to be explained later in this

⁷⁷ *Tim.* 47E. Donald J. Zeyl, trans., “*Timaeus*,” in Cooper, *Plato*, 1250, renders this passage as: “Now in all but a brief part of the discourse I have just completed I have presented what has been crafted by Intellect.”

⁷⁸ Against Thomas Robinson, *Plato's Psychology*, xx-xxi, xxvii, who accepts a Demiurge god that has a composite soul because he has reason and is in motion. A careful reading of the *Timaeus* finds little support for a view that the demiurge is anything other than divine reason itself.

⁷⁹ *Tim.* 48D.

⁸⁰ *Tim.* 46D-49B, 50D, 51A. Modern astrophysicists might recognize it as the known huge body of hot, invisible gaseous matter than has recently been discovered using x-ray astronomy.

chapter. It would be technically inaccurate to call it the “stuff” of chaos, for it is not purely chaotic, nor in any way evil; however, to the mortal observer it seems to be best described as chaos. It is a Form in itself, but of a special kind, baffling and obscure.⁸¹ It is like bottled-up Change, perhaps, appearing to change state from fire to ice to water to vapor at random, constantly changing from one state to another.⁸² It is normally invisible, unshaped and all-receptive – hence the name Receptacle. Like water vaporizing and later condensing back to water, the “stuff” can change from visible to invisible and back again.⁸³ It is divine because, in a perplexing way, it partakes of the intelligible.⁸⁴ It would be wrong to consider this “stuff,” in its original state, to be matter, because it is invisible, unstable, and unformed. Modern physicists might consider it to be an energy field, convertible into matter according to Einstein, but not yet matter – thus Plato’s term “Becoming” seems appropriate. It is high-potential, uncontrolled, seemingly crazy stuff, constantly changing state in a way that human reason cannot discern, causing what appears to be chaotic motion, so full of potential that everything nearby shakes, even other Forms!⁸⁵

⁸¹ *Tim.* 49A. For the name “Nurse of Becoming” see 52D.

⁸² *Tim.* 49D.

⁸³ *Tim.* 49C.

⁸⁴ *Tim.* 51A-B.

⁸⁵ *Tim.* 52E. Plato says being around this “stuff” is like observing an instrument used for cleaning corn, a vibrating sieve whereby the good corn settles and the lighter kernels fly off. In this metaphor, the vibration itself is orderly, but the action on the lighter corn would appear chaotic and reckless.

But the “stuff” is not evil, after all, it is divine, and all divinity is good.⁸⁶

Reason, like a craftsman, combined the raw, uncontrolled energy of the Receptacle with the “intelligent persuasion” of Reason, itself following the pattern of the Ideas, and thus brought order out of disorder. The result was an all-good universe, the best possible under the given conditions.⁸⁷ Paul Elmer More offers an excellent, and extensive, account of this divine mixing of Reason and Necessity, including detailed charts. He waxes on about various terms and ways to look at this combination of two divine aspects, such as when Reason meets Necessity; Ideal Pattern meets the substance to be molded; Order meets Chaos, Chance or Potential; Design meets the Abyss of Chaos; Mechanical Law meets Pure Chance; Purpose meets Purposeless; God meets Space. More concludes by saying that in the *Timaeus* account, Stoic Physics (order) meets Epicurean Physics (randomness), and that Plato succeeded in harmonizing the two views, although this was hardly his main purpose.⁸⁸

Reason formed the soul of humans by a mixing process. The gods got the pure, immaterial, divine soul from the first mix. Then from the leftovers of the former mixture, remixed with the invisible “stuff” transformed from the Receptacle, Reason mixed the souls of the stars and of all humankind. Reason,

⁸⁶ This “stuff” is compatible with the corruption of matter because matter is formed from “stuff” that is unstable to begin with. Thus a body, when dead, decays, as do plants. Dead things seem to disappear into an invisible state, back to that of the original “stuff.”

⁸⁷ *Tim.* 48A. *Resp.* 506E-507A, 508C has Creation being the firstborn of the Good, thus the Good was one of the Ideas (fixed, eternal thought) at which the craftsman (active, ongoing thought) was contemplating as the Universe was formed.

⁸⁸ More, *Religion of Plato*, 215-31.

then, as the creator, disclosed to all souls the total plan to distribute and eventually recollect the soul “stuff.” Each star got some, and the rest was allocated to humans, under the Law of Destiny: the first birth is the same for one and all – we are all created equal, as souls – and as created souls we have all seen the nature of the universe. Part of the plan is that these seeds of the soul are to be sown in humans by Necessity (this seems to mean according to fate rather than randomness), where they are to be grown, and when grown, returned to their former abodes.⁸⁹ The souls were created first, by divine Reason. That is, the intelligible world was completed first by Reason. Then the formation of all material bodies was turned over to lower deities.⁹⁰ This will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

In the *Timaeus* creation account, Plato attempts to address a sticky theological problem: If the soul is always in motion, then how can it be divine? Plato could not say that God’s Mind controls it, because that would make a human to be some sort of robot or automaton. Furthermore, divine things are not supposed to be mutable, and not supposed to change. Plato had to find something in the soul’s motion-causing characteristic that could meet the criteria of divine. What he came up with was the divine Receptacle, a Form of a special kind, which is the bottled-up, concentrated energy that was the “stuff” that could be converted into matter, either visible or invisible, and back again as necessary.

⁸⁹ *Tim.* 41D-42A.

⁹⁰ *Resp.* 611D; *Tim.* 42D-E, 69C. Lower deities formed the bodies of humans but the soul that was formed by divine Reason goes into these bodies.

Plato defined a special divine Form whose nature was one of constant change, and it is this “stuff” that, when ordered by Reason, becomes the soul.

World Soul

In order to complete this discussion of Creation, something needs to be said about the World-Soul concept found in *Timaeus* 36E-40D and *Laws* 897, which describe the pattern of the heavens and orderly movement of the stars and planets. The World Soul, according to the *Phaedrus*, is the source of all movement in the universe, and if it were absent, or ceased to exist, the whole Universe would pass out of existence, a sobering thought.⁹¹ Remember that the orderly rotation of the heavenly bodies is itself the strongest evidence and the major premise for two of Plato's three proofs of the existence of God: those of *Phaedo* 97 and *Laws* 893, both based on the uniform motion of the stars. Plato completes his system here by placing a piece of the World Soul in each star, and eventually into each human body, because Reason can bring order only to something that has a soul.⁹² The *Timaeus* paragraphs simply establish the basis for those facts: the stars have soul and are ordered by Reason. World Soul is a hypostatized creation of Reason that is itself fully rational. In Plato's *Timaeus*, although Reason is uncreated and the World Soul is created, it is difficult to distinguish their characteristics other than to recognize that World Soul is

⁹¹ *Phaedr.* 245C-246A. See Solmsen, *Plato's Theology*, 84.

⁹² *Tim.* 30B; *Leg.* 897B. 898A, 966D, 967B.

"blended of the natures of the *Same* and the *Other* and *Being*."⁹³ The *Same* is *Being* that is unchangeable, eternal and indivisible, while the *Other* is *Being* that can change, is transient and divisible into bodies.⁹⁴ It seems that the *Same* has the attributes of divine Reason, while the *Other* has those of the aforementioned transformed "stuff," or Necessity. The World Soul, then, is a an inseparable mixture of the static element of divine Reason and the dynamic, life-force element of Necessity, similar in makeup to the soul within all moving bodies.

In *Laws*, Plato seems to allow evidence that Soul admits to be the cause of things good or bad, just or unjust, because it is the cause of all things. This notion of good or bad soul also applies to the soul of the heavens and stars. Thus, two souls, the good and the bad, are allowed only for the purpose of hypothetical discourse. This very brief off-hand remark by the Athenian, taken alone, would seem to run contrary to Plato's entire systematic philosophy. Furthermore, finding this duality in one of the last books written in Plato's long career might be wrongly taken as his final word on these matters. Prior to *Laws*, Plato had a highly developed and expounded theory of the origins of evil: it is due to either ignorance or madness.⁹⁵ He did not need an evil world soul to explain human evil. However, he had not said much about natural evil, such as earthquakes and volcanoes. After all, disorderly things move, and something

⁹³ *Tim.* 37A.

⁹⁴ *Tim.* 35A. Cf. *Soph.* 244-45.

⁹⁵ *Leg.* 689B, 691C; *Resp.* 382C-E; *Tim.* 86B.

makes them move. Reason and Soul provide the movement for all God's creation, whether deemed by humans to be good or not,⁹⁶ but because God is good, the bad soul would seem to be a major, if not fatal, paradox of Plato. What seems to be allowed in this passage is nothing less than cosmic dualism, but that would be totally inconsistent with the remainder of Plato's thinking. Even so, the later Gnostics would use these few verses of the *Laws*, especially the part about the bad soul that "allies itself with unreason (*anoia*) and produces completely opposite results," to help justify their dualistic systems.⁹⁷

What the proof-text exploiters of this passage in *Laws* fail to notice is that the Athenian and Clinias are in a serious dispute that is driving toward Socratic *elenchus* – a complete turn-around – and the Athenian is restating Clinias' case as a postulation, which he asks him to confirm before attacking.⁹⁸ After the restatement, the Athenian's long subsequent argument proceeds to obtain concurrence that (1) the course and motion of Heaven is under the reckonings of Reason,⁹⁹ (2) Reason regulates the cosmos and absolute unreason (*anoia*)

⁹⁶ *Leg.* 896E-897A. "Soul drives all things in Heaven and earth and sea by its own motions, of which the names are wish, reflection, forethought, counsel, opinion true and false, joy grief, confidence, fear, hate, love ..." (Bury, LCL).

⁹⁷ *Leg.* 897B, from Trevor J. Saunders, trans., "Laws," in Cooper, *Plato*, 1554. This theological dualism may have originated from Persian (Zoroastrian) influences, according to Riley, *River of God*, 93-95.

⁹⁸ Vlastos, *Socrates: Ironist*, 111-4, defines Socratic *elenchus* as a debate wherein a thesis is refuted by a complete negation of it by the answerer's own beliefs. It can be speculated that Socrates would have performed this *elenchus* by talking less than did the Athenian Stranger and extracting the vital information from his interlocutor. Nonetheless, due to the Athenian's questions, Clinias ends up reversing himself.

⁹⁹ *Leg.* 897C.

would produce motion that is never uniform or regular;¹⁰⁰ (3) each of the heavenly bodies driven around can be considered as a god;¹⁰¹ (4) each and every one of the gods is good and attentive to every detail of human affairs and is not lazy, idle, indolent, or neglectful;¹⁰² and finally, (5) the person who claims that cosmic bad souls exist is saying that the gods either allow neglect or are lazy, and the person saying that is impious.¹⁰³ Clinias is forced to acknowledge that what he had earlier said was wrong. The Athenian then declares that "all things are ordered systematically by Him who cares for the World-all with a view to the preservation and excellence of the Whole."¹⁰⁴ Plato has set up the concept of a dualistic soul of the Universe only to knock it down dramatically and obtain unqualified recantation from its advocate.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ *Leg.* 898B-C.

¹⁰¹ *Leg.* 899B. Thales' dictum is acknowledged: "All things are full of gods."

¹⁰² *Leg.* 900D-901E.

¹⁰³ *Leg.* 902E-903A.

¹⁰⁴ *Leg.* 903B (Bury, LCL).

¹⁰⁵ "The later theory of two world-souls, and even of a lower, "evil" world soul, is a perversion and caricature of Plato's thought, and should not be attributed to him," in Frederick Grant, *Roman Hellenism*, 58. Another concept used by the Gnostics is that of an evil world soul, which was compounded with the aforementioned concept of a personified Demiurge separate from God, to justify an evil creator. These erroneous interpretations of Plato call into question their access to good texts. One possible view is that the Gnostics were working with a compendium of excerpts from Plato's works, a dangerous practice in dealing with Plato's often protracted arguments.

The Individual Soul

Each human being possesses a soul that is part of the divine, intelligible world. Plato, however, discusses the human soul as a unity in places, such as *Phaedo*, but as something having three parts in other places, such as *Republic*, *Phaedrus* and *Laws*. Plato's notion of the soul may have evolved over his lifetime, but the discussion of development is beyond the scope of this thesis.

The three parts of the soul that are mentioned are that of reason, appetite, and passion. As discussed in *Republic IV*, the only truly divine portion of the soul is the reasonable part, and the others are associated with the soul's interface to the body. Plato did not set boundaries and interfaces for the three parts, because they do not separately exist.

To address this issue, W. K. C. Guthrie presented the viable overview that Plato's notion of the soul is that of a unity without separable parts. Guthrie explains it as follows:

Now "the individual soul in its true nature" is for Plato, or has been hitherto, the soul of the complete philosopher, which has cast off all the trammels of this world and won its way to the divine plane of reality where dwell the eternal Forms and the gods to which it is akin, being itself immortal and divine.¹⁰⁶

The later Hellenistic Jews simply did not worry about exactly how many parts the soul comprised. The soul was treated as a unity, but its possible

¹⁰⁶ W. K. C. Guthrie, "Plato's Views on the Nature of the Soul," in *Recherches sur la Tradition Platonicienne* (Vandoeuvres: Fondation Hardt pour l'Étude de l'Antiquité Classique, 1955), 15.

negative influence by the body might be best explained using the notion of three parts. Philo, for example, followed Plato's notion of the three part soul, under the condition that the parts all had to submit to virtue and participate in it in order to move on.¹⁰⁷

Anthropology

The Body-Soul Problem

The interpretation of Plato that attempts to establish hate between body and soul is of questionable validity, has been greatly exaggerated, and ignores other options.¹⁰⁸ Man consists of body and soul, says Plato, but the soul is intended to be the ruler of the body, and is the real self, for we are our souls.¹⁰⁹ The soul is invisible and immortal, and the body visible and mortal,¹¹⁰ The body, since it is not divine, is by nature inferior to the body, as the ruler is superior to the ruled.¹¹¹ Yet, it is not valid to say that Plato advocated the hate of the body by the soul of the person, despite the troublesome lines in *Phaedo*, the first being:

¹⁰⁷ Philo, *Her.* 225; *QE* 1.12.

¹⁰⁸ See David Ray Griffin, *God and Religion in the Postmodern World: Essays in Postmodern Theology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 86. Griffin says that the notion of interaction between soul and body raises a serious theological problem that has resulted in the postmodern conviction by several authors that neither soul nor mind is real, but simply the action of the brain.

¹⁰⁹ [*Alc. Maj.*] 129E, 130C-E; *Phaed.* 80A, 94B; *Leg.* 959B.

¹¹⁰ *Phaed.* 79B; *Soph.* 247B.

¹¹¹ *Crito* 48A.

“... εἰ γὰρ διαβέβληνται μὲν πανταχῇ τῷ σώματι.”¹¹² The translations of LCL and Jowett are particularly harsh, here, for “*diabēblēntai men pantachē*” is translated as “in every way hostile” (LCL), and “to have always been enemies” (Jowett). Much preferred is “altogether estranged from” (Grube¹¹³), because the verb *diabēblēntai* does not mean *hate*, but being *at crossed positions* from one another. In the *Politicus*, Plato related the educated soul and body to the warp and woof in weaving, with the soul (warp) and animal body (woof) being bound together with a divine bond. Surely the warp does not hate the woof, but is fully crosswise with it at all times.¹¹⁴ Granted, the body and soul are often in opposition, as one hand of the archer pushes away the bow and the other draws it nigh, but each to the same cause.¹¹⁵

The soul hating the body is akin to the intelligible world hating the material, sensible world, which is ridiculous in Plato's system. After all, the material world is created in the image of the Ideas, including the Idea of the Beautiful, and through appreciation of the material world's beauty one can approach the true Beauty of the divine.¹¹⁶ There can be no cosmic animosity between the two worlds, and no hate of the body by the soul.

¹¹² *Phaed.* 67E.

¹¹³ G. M. A. Grube, trans., “Phaedo,” in Cooper, *Plato*, 59.

¹¹⁴ *Pol.* 309C-E.

¹¹⁵ *Resp.* 439B.

¹¹⁶ *Symp.* 211C.

A second problematic phrase is "... τοῦ φιλοσόφου ψυχὴ μάλιστα ἀτιμάζει τὸ σῶμα καὶ φεύγει ἀπ' αὐτοῦ" ¹¹⁷ The problematic words *malista atimazei* have been translated as *despise* (LCL), *disdain* (Grube), or *dishonor* (Jowett). Dishonor, or "hold in less honor" seems a better choice here, and certainly not "despise." Plato's *Laws* explains that the soul must be held in the highest place of honor, and the body as second. ¹¹⁸ Plato did not intend for the wise person to hate or despise the body, but rather to rule it, and bring its desires and impulses into submission, ¹¹⁹ as one controls an unruly child, or a beast. Granted, Plato did liken the body to a beast in several places, ¹²⁰ but in other places he treated the body, and its health, with great respect. ¹²¹

The body is neither good nor bad, and is to be cared for and exercised in moderation. ¹²² The divine things such as wisdom, temperance of soul, and justice are the great gifts, but among the human gifts from God are ranked health, beauty, and strength, in that order. ¹²³ Socrates himself was said to keep his body in good condition by exercise, including exercise by dancing, even when

¹¹⁷ *Phaed.* 65D.

¹¹⁸ *Leg.* 729B. A lower place of honor for the body is certainly not a dishonor.

¹¹⁹ *Phaed.* 82C.

¹²⁰ See *Phaedr.* 230A, 246A; *Resp.* 588B; *Tim.* 70E, for the discussion of soul inside, beast outside.

¹²¹ References for the highest importance of health are *Gorg.* 451E, 452A-B; *Leg.* 631C, 661A, 728D-E; *Euthyd.* 279A-B; *Meno* 87E; *Crito* 47D-E; and *Eryxias* 393C.

¹²² *Leg.* 790C, 791C; *Lysis* 217B, 219A. *Tim.* 88B; *Charm.* 157B; *Lovers* 134B.

¹²³ *Leg.* 631B-C.

near the age of seventy.¹²⁴ The key to having a good body, however, is to first have a virtuous soul.¹²⁵ By no means were Socrates and his student Plato advocates of either ascetic or encratite mentality.

Plato in several places refers to the body – tomb, *σῶμά σῆμα*, analogy that he attributes to the Orphics.¹²⁶ In this view, the soul is entrapped, actually dead and entombed within the body, or even imprisoned like an oyster in its shell.¹²⁷ Socrates explains this view, without assigning it much credibility, as being the Orphic notion that the soul is being punished within the prison of the body for something previously done, and held until the penalty has been paid.¹²⁸ Plato does recognize that the body retards and restricts the soul from achieving divine knowledge; in fact, all that a wise person is able to obtain of divine knowledge is a rare glimpse of the heavenly Ideas. It is only after death that the lover of wisdom can permanently attain divine knowledge.¹²⁹ But a prison or a clamshell or the weave of a cloth is not in itself an evil thing, nor does Plato anywhere affirm that the body in itself is evil. Rather, Plato says that becoming enslaved to the bodily pleasures is indeed evil, as will be discussed in the *Sin* section of this chapter.

¹²⁴ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 2.22, 32; Xenophon, *Symp.* 2.17-21.

¹²⁵ *Resp.* 403D.

¹²⁶ *Gorg.* 492E-493C; *Crat.* 400C.

¹²⁷ *Phaedr.* 250C.

¹²⁸ *Crat.* 400C.

¹²⁹ *Phaed.* 64B, 66E, 67C; *Theaet.* 176A-B.

The Human Soul Seeks its Divine Kin

The human soul, according to Plato, was not only formed by the Mind of God but is itself “akin” to the divine.¹³⁰ The soul is prior in origin to the body and akin to the invisible, changeless and absolutely true, or true Being.¹³¹ Because of this kinship, the soul is always seeking its kin, the divine, and eager for knowledge of it.¹³² Divine knowledge is sought because human reason is akin to divine Reason in Heaven, and the wisdom that philosophers obtain is akin to the highest Good.¹³³

Proofs of the Immortality of the Soul

The immortality of the soul is so important to Plato that he offers the reader four proofs, two in *Phaedo*, a third in *Phaedrus* and the fourth in the *Republic*. The multiple proofs of the immortality of the soul, together with those of the existence of God and the paths to salvation, form the three pillars resting on bedrock, upon which all of Plato’s theology is constructed.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ *Resp.* 611E; *Pol.* 309C. *Tim.* 69C is read as Reason, or Mind, forming the soul, which is received by the lower deities, the sons of Reason, to wrap into mortal human bodies.

¹³¹ *Leg.* 892A; *Phaed.* 79B, D; *Phileb.* 59B; *Resp.* 490B, 501D.

¹³² *Leg.* 899D; *Ep.* 2.312. For Christian kinship to God, consider Acts 17:28-29, “For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’ Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals.”

¹³³ *Tim.* 47B, D; *Phileb.* 65B.

¹³⁴ From knowing that God and the Soul exists comes the realization that the human soul is from God and desires to return to God. How it returns to God, via Reason, is its salvation.

Proof by Self-Moving Motion

This proof, found in the *Phaedrus*, is similar in concept to the aforementioned Proof of the Existence of God by Motion in *Laws*. Here, though, it is the soul that is said to be in constant motion, by the observation that the soul is the life force and that every living thing is constantly in motion, and every dead thing is motionless, hence the soul must be responsible.¹³⁵ It is obvious that the soul, the life force, leaves the body at its death, hence the soul continues to be in motion, because if it could not leave, then life would necessarily continue. Furthermore, since the soul is ever moving, it can never die, else it would not be moving, and is therefore indestructible and immortal.¹³⁶ The fact that the soul not only moves itself but causes the body to move shows that the soul is the beginning of motion. Finally, and this is important, since the soul is the beginning of motion, then it is *ungenerated*.¹³⁷ That is, here the soul is described as uncreated, which means it is a part of the Divine itself. Recall that in the *Timaeus*, the soul was formed by Reason from “stuff” that was eternal, divine Necessity, an Idea in itself. A casual reading of the *Timaeus* might indicate that the formation of the soul, by mixing, is equivalent to the creation by God. However, here in the *Phaedrus*, the soul is said to be uncreated, a view that may

Accordingly, these three pillars answer the famous three questions of antiquity: Where are we from? Where are we to go? What can we do to get back?

¹³⁵ *Phaedr.* 245E-246A. The criticism of this proof is that the premise is unproven that the soul continues to move after the body is dead.

¹³⁶ *Phaedr.* 245C.

¹³⁷ *Phaedr.* 245C-D.

simply mean that forming the pre-existing, uncreated, divine “stuff” is not the same as the act of creating it. The visible universe indeed was created, as the *Timaeus* clearly says.¹³⁸ The *Timaeus* also says that when the gods were created, they were not yet wholly immortal, because this condition was before souls were formed and given to the gods and bodies of the universe.¹³⁹

Plato wraps up this proof by saying: “To tell what it (the soul) really is would be a matter for utterly superhuman and long discourse” He then introduces the great myth of the *Phaedrus*, the comparison of the soul to the composite nature of a charioteer and a pair of winged horses, one of good nature, the other of bad.¹⁴⁰

Proof by Indestructibility of the Soul

In the *Republic*, an observation is made that things that are corruptible continually worsen under disease, rot, or rust, whatever their congenital enemy may be.¹⁴¹ That is, rust destroys iron until nothing is left, and the worst is at the very end. The same applies for rot applied to grain or disease for the body, enemies that destroy their victims until they are not a grain or body at all. It is also noted that if a substance's congenital enemy does not destroy it, then

¹³⁸ *Tim.* 28B-C says the sensible, tangible world has come into existence.

¹³⁹ *Tim.* 41A-D. This account has the gods generated and existing prior to the delivery of their immortal souls to them.

¹⁴⁰ *Phaedr.* 246A.

¹⁴¹ *Resp.* 609A-B.

nothing can. It was accepted that the vices of the soul clearly are injustice and wickedness, which are the natural, congenital diseases of the soul.¹⁴² Thus one might expect that as the soul becomes more unjust and unholy, due to evil, then the maximum wickedness would occur just as a person is dying. However, the contrary is observed, for wickedness does not kill a person, but makes them very lively indeed. So for something not to be destroyed by its natural enemy, hence not destroyed by anything, then it must always exist and be immortal.¹⁴³

Plato ends the proof in the *Republic* by noting that because souls are immortal, there must be a finite, fixed number of them so that their number neither becomes fewer nor yet more numerous.¹⁴⁴ This is consistent with the statement in the *Timaeus* that the number of souls is precisely equal to the number of stars.¹⁴⁵ When the number of souls is used up, with every soul having fallen to earth as seed its prescribed number of times, the world as we know it will end.¹⁴⁶ This concept played a prominent part when the Hellenistic Jews adopted it, saying that God created a fixed number of souls in the beginning that are stored in heaven awaiting incarnation, after which they are to be returned to heaven if and when purified.

¹⁴² *Resp.* 609D.

¹⁴³ *Resp.* 610E-611A.

¹⁴⁴ *Resp.* 611A.

¹⁴⁵ *Tim.* 41D. Thomas Robinson, *Plato's Psychology*, 85-86, notes that a universe governed by divine providence cannot pick just *any* number, or a haphazard, or variable number.

¹⁴⁶ *Pol.* 272E. The world will not be completely destroyed, but will be renewed in cyclic repetition.

Proof by Inadmission of Opposites to Life

There is a short proof within the *Phaedo* in a discussion between Socrates and Cebes that works with the definition of opposites, e.g. light cannot admit darkness, justice cannot admit injustice, musical does not admit unmusical, etc. The fact that the soul is that which causes the body to be alive is confirmed, as is the premise that death is the opposite of life.¹⁴⁷ Thus the soul, which is life, cannot admit its opposite, death, and is thus immortal.¹⁴⁸

Proof by Cycle of Opposites, Invisibility, and Recollection

Earlier in *Phaedo*, Plato gave a long, concatenated proof of a pre-existing soul that brings into bear his theory of recollection of knowledge. However, within the proof itself, Plato introduces, for the first time in this book, the topic of reincarnation and its cycle. An opening statement to the proof is the accepted fact that death is the separation of the soul from the body, whence forth the body and the soul exist alone by themselves.¹⁴⁹ The proof, however, is wrapped up in another notion, that of how humans obtain knowledge. It is agreed that divine knowledge is difficult to obtain through the ordinary processes of the bodily senses, even though the senses do play a part in that they can trigger

¹⁴⁷ *Phaed.* 105C-D.

¹⁴⁸ *Phaed.* 105E. The fallacy of this argument is that while it is true that life cannot admit concurrent death, life could stop and death begin.

¹⁴⁹ *Phaed.* 64C.

recollection of the divine Forms, examples being seeing mathematical diagrams and equal objects that remind the viewer of equality in the abstract, the memories of which were acquired prior to birth.¹⁵⁰

The best way to approach true, pure knowledge is through reason (*logismos*), which in turn, can only function when the person involved is removed from the senses or any other bodily hindrances caused by its need of sustenance, etc., with the worst being the enslaving desire to gain money.¹⁵¹ If divine, absolute knowledge is ever to be obtained, the person must be free of the bodily senses and must behold the actual realities with the eye of the soul alone.¹⁵² An interim conclusion is reached that if pure knowledge cannot be obtained when the body is with us, then either it cannot be acquired at all or only when the body is dead. All that a philosopher can do while alive is purify the soul by education, including teaching it the habit of being independent, as much as possible, of the body.

This line of thought is then sidelined, and an interim inner proof commences that considers the ancient tradition of rebirth after death.¹⁵³ A premise is introduced that everything that has an opposite must have been generated from its opposite, such as the greater from the smaller, and vice versa.

¹⁵⁰ *Phaed.* 73A-B; 74A-75D.

¹⁵¹ *Phaed.* 65E-66E.

¹⁵² *Phaed.* 66D. For other passages by Plato concerning the eye of the soul, see *Symp.* 219A; *Soph.* 254A; *Resp.* 519B, 533D; *Phaed.* 99E.

¹⁵³ *Phaed.* 70B-D.

The conclusion is that since death is the opposite of living, then these two are generated from each other, like sleeping from being awake, and waking from being asleep. A corollary is that the souls of the dead must exist in the other world.¹⁵⁴ These cycles make sense, it is reasoned, else in the end, all things would have the same form; that is, everything would be dead, and nothing alive. The criticism of this inner proof is the premise that everything is generated from its opposite.

The argument now returns to the major proof of the soul's immortality and existence *prior* to incarnation. To continue, recollection is defined as remembered knowledge, but often enough not of like things; e.g. seeing a lyre may bring back the memory of a loved person playing it.¹⁵⁵ At this point, the concept of equality in the abstract is introduced, with examples in the sensual world; when a person sees two things, they immediately are able to discern if they are equal or not, even if the things have never been seen before. A person is able to discern equality because they had somehow previously gained knowledge of abstract or absolute equality, even before they acquired their senses, which happened at birth.¹⁵⁶ For that matter, the argument can be extended to include not only absolute equality, but absolute Beauty, Good, Just, and Holy, all of which we recognize when we see examples of them in the

¹⁵⁴ *Phaed.* 71C-72A.

¹⁵⁵ *Phaed.* 73A-74A.

¹⁵⁶ *Phaed.* 74B-75C. Recall *Tim.* 41E where God informed each soul of divine knowledge, giving it the power to rekindle and recollect it.

sensual world. If we had this knowledge before birth, but then lost or forgot it, then the process of learning is recovering knowledge that is already owned, which is recollection.¹⁵⁷ Because we recognize the equality of things without study, it must be that our souls existed before they were in human form, apart from a body, and had intelligence. Socrates admits that the argument is based on the existence of the abstract Ideas, but since they exist eternally, so must the soul pre-exist. Socrates has proven the prior existence of the soul, but now Cebes pushes him further, to show that the soul exists *after* death.¹⁵⁸

Socrates continues, first establishing that the soul is uncompounded and not subject to decomposition, hence is uniform and unchanging, as is the absolute essence, the true being. It is also invisible, and can be grasped only by reason (*dianoias logismō*), hence it much more resembles the divine than the mortal.¹⁵⁹ Accordingly, when the soul, if purified, leaves the body after death, neither scattered nor destroyed, and goes away into that which is like itself: the invisible, divine, immortal, and wise. Here, the soul lives in truth through all time with the gods.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ *Phaed.* 75D-76A. See also *Phileb.* 34B and *Meno* 81C for the notion of recollection.

¹⁵⁸ *Phaed.* 77B-C.

¹⁵⁹ *Phaed.* 78C-80B.

¹⁶⁰ *Phaed.* 81A.

The Problem with Reincarnation

At this point in the *Phaedo*, Socrates offers conjecture about the soul that has become impure due to a life of desires and pleasures. A soul so corrupted is interpenetrated with the corporeal and weighed down, burdensome, heavy, and visible, not unlike a shadowy shape that hangs around a gravesite.¹⁶¹ It is likely, he says, that the worst of these souls will be imprisoned in future incarnations in natures which correspond to the practices of their former life, perhaps likely to pass into various beasts, asses, wolves, or hawks. The best of these worst souls, who have had no philosophy but practiced justice and moderation anyway, will likely pass into some gentle species such as bees or ants, or perhaps the human race again. But only a philosopher, who is pure when he departs, will enter the communion of the gods.¹⁶² The discussion dwells on this conjecture, and then fades.

Cebes, although agreeing that the soul pre-existed, remains unconvinced that the soul will remain in existence after the body has died.¹⁶³ It is important to note that Cebes refuses to accept reincarnation of any sort. Socrates then tries out the notion that a soul wears out many bodies, like a man wears out many

¹⁶¹ *Phaed.* 81D.

¹⁶² *Phaed.* 81B-82C.

¹⁶³ *Phaed.* 87A. See Robert Leet Patterson, *Plato on Immortality* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965), 88-106, for an extensive discussion on Cebes' challenge to Socrates' hypothesis on post-existence of the soul.

coats in his lifetime. But that approach, too, is rejected by Cebes. Also rejected by Socrates, after much deliberation, is that the soul is a harmony, because a harmony cannot move, and cannot have a part in discord or wickedness.¹⁶⁴

Finally, Socrates re-summarizes the status of the debate, continuing to insist that the soul is immortal before and after entry into the body. Socrates notes that Cebes is not concerned whether the soul enters the body once or many times, because in any case the fear of death must be faced. Cebes agrees to Socrates' assessment. Socrates then thinks to himself for some time before agreeing that the proof of the soul's afterlife is no easy argument.¹⁶⁵ He neither directly addresses nor defends Cebes' problem with reincarnation again through dialog. The debate ends with Socrates' proof of the soul's immortality by inadmission to opposites of life, as discussed above, which does not imply reincarnation. Later, in *Phaedo*, as in the *Republic* and the *Phaedrus*, Socrates resorts to myth to describe his opinions as to what happens after death when the soul reaches Tartarus, which includes *both* eternal punishment or reward *and* reincarnation.¹⁶⁶ Plato's use of myth intertwined with logic has been a subject of much discussion. The general conclusion is that Plato's doctrines are not proved by use of myth; rather, myth is used when doctrine fails, to push over the limits of

¹⁶⁴ *Phaed.* 92A-95A. That the soul was a harmony was a doctrine of Pythagoras, "like the terms in the proportion of a musical scale" (*Resp.* 433 D-F).

¹⁶⁵ *Phaed.* 95D-E.

¹⁶⁶ The myth begins at *Phaed.* 110B. Cf. *Resp.* 330D, where Cephalus' worry is about the punishment in Hades, without mention of an afterlife.

logic and into the area of the mystical.¹⁶⁷ Here in the *Phaedo*, this long argument has ended in several concessions as to the afterlife. Even Socrates could not prove the notion of reincarnation, and it must not be taken as a doctrine of Plato's. What was very clear, however, was that after the death of the body, the soul goes on to dwell in another world.¹⁶⁸

The Human Soul Made in the Image of God

Plato draws an analogy between the mind and soul of humans and that of God, as was shown above in the Proof of the Existence of God, Argument by Analogy to Humans.¹⁶⁹ The ontological elements that make up our souls exist in more pure form throughout Heaven. God (Reason) formed the Universe and the Soul substance in the image of the Ideas.¹⁷⁰

Equality of All Souls

Another important statement is found in *Phaedo* 93, that all souls are created equal. No soul is even to the slightest degree a more complete or greater

¹⁶⁷ See Friedländer, *Plato: An Introduction*, 189-210. Plato's theory of recollection, however, is an example where the pre-existence of the soul is discussed outside of myth, as in the dialectic of *Phaed.* 70C-72E. This theory of recollection can be related to the *Timaeus* myth (41E-42E) about the originally imparted divine knowledge.

¹⁶⁸ *Phaed.* 107A. See *Ep.* 7.335B-C, when the wrong-doer goes beneath the earth on a journey that is unhonored and in all ways utterly miserable. See also *Apol.* 40C, where Socrates says that death is either nothingness or "a change and migration of the soul from this to another place," without mention of reincarnation.

¹⁶⁹ See esp. *Phileb.* 29E-30E.

¹⁷⁰ *Tim.* 39E, 41D-42A.

soul than any other.¹⁷¹ Some incarnate souls may be said to develop the possession of folly and wickedness, and others virtue and goodness, but this only shows that they are not a harmony. In fact, says Socrates, all souls are by nature equally souls, and all equally good. This is a thoroughly Platonic thought that says that the relationship of a person's soul to the divine is independent of geographical, racial, or national boundaries. There are no "chosen souls" who get special favor or treatment prior to incarnation.

In *Laws*, Plato explains that human souls exist for the sake of the Whole (the World Soul), and that the human soul is bound to care for the preservation and excellence of the Whole, even though it is but a small fraction of it. The part is for the sake of the Whole, and not the Whole for the sake of a part.¹⁷²

Absolute Measure of Virtue

Plato is adamant that there exist absolute measures of virtue, especially of knowledge and justice, but also temperance, piety, courage, and others. Plato is particularly hostile to relative measures of virtues, as exemplified by Protagoras' claim that "Man is the measure of all things."¹⁷³ "Nothing that is imperfect," said

¹⁷¹ *Phaed.* 93D. This is compatible with the formation and uniform distribution of the souls in *Tim.* 41-42. Since all souls are created equal, then every soul should be regarded as equally valuable. Cf. Jesus' saying "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," in Mark 12:29-31, and the command to love our enemies in Matt 5:44; Luke 6:27, 35.

¹⁷² *Leg.* 903B-D. See Frederick Grant, *Roman Hellenism*, 59-60, for this notion's relation to Christian saints.

¹⁷³ *Theaet.* 152A. *Crat.* 385E-386C.

Socrates, "is the measure of anything."¹⁷⁴ The problematic doctrine of Protagoras was similar to "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" in that a person's opinions about something were justifiably normative in his behavior. Socrates plays with this a bit in noting that Protagoras' doctrine was unpopular with the multitude. Accordingly if each of the multitude's opinions were true, but held that Protagoras was wrong, then Protagoras would have to acknowledge that his opinion was wrong.¹⁷⁵

Saying something is true based on one's personal opinion and not knowledge, or someone else's opinion, is an error, says Socrates: "Neither a dog nor any casual man is a measure of anything whatsoever that he has not learned."¹⁷⁶ Socrates later concludes that God, for example, is perfectly righteous, not relatively so. "The knowledge of this is wisdom or true virtue, and the ignorance of it is folly or manifest wickedness."¹⁷⁷ Those who do not realize this, who think that they are clever by being unrighteous, but who are impious or vulgar, are in error and need to be told so, else they suffer a penalty that has been established by the divine. The penalty is that they live a life conforming to the foolish and blind notion that their cleverness justifies becoming evil and associating with other evil men, and after their deaths they will not be received

¹⁷⁴ *Resp.* 504C.

¹⁷⁵ *Theaet.* 169E-171B. See 152C where Socrates accuses Protagoras of saying "man is the measure" to the common public herd but secretly denying it to his disciples.

¹⁷⁶ *Theaet.* 171B-C.

¹⁷⁷ *Theaet.* 176 C.

into the blessed place that is free of all evil.¹⁷⁸ Socrates' argument can be fairly restated by saying that those who accept the measure of man will face eternal punishment, while those who accept the absolute, perfect measure of God will see their blessed reward in Heaven. As the Athenian in *Laws* exclaimed, "In our eyes God will be 'the measure of all things' in the highest degree – a degree much higher than in any 'man' they talk of."¹⁷⁹

Demons of the Soul

Socrates' *daimonion* was a divine voice or sign that warned him when he was about to make a wrong moral choice, not dissimilar to the modern concept of a guardian angel. There is nothing evil about Socrates' *daimonion*. The evil demons of the Christian era cannot be directly derived from the Greek *daimonion* phenomena.¹⁸⁰ However, a non-personified version of the New Testament demon can be found in Plato's works under another term, in particular, *anoia* or sometimes *alogia*, literally meaning un-mind and un-reason. *Anoia* is usually translated as *folly*, which does not adequately describe Plato's usage of the word, because *anoia* entomologically connotes the *absence* of mind or reason;

¹⁷⁸ *Theaet.* 176E-177A. There is no mention of reincarnation here.

¹⁷⁹ *Leg.* 716C (Bury, LCL). Philo, in QG 4.8 (Marcus, LCL), says "God alone is the measure of all things, both intelligible and sense-perceptible . . ." Jesus will put it this way: "The measure you give will be the measure you get" (Mark 4:24; Matt 7:2; Luke 6:38).

¹⁸⁰ Xenocrates is said to have first recognized the existence of evil demons. See Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (trans. John Raffan; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 179-81, 331-32. "What is new and made a momentous impression was the thesis that among those *daimones* there are downright evil beings, filled with greed for blood and sexuality" (332).

that is, the absence of the controlling part of the soul that is intended to keep the beastly part of the soul at bay. *Anoia*, when personified as Folly, means an absolute unreason.¹⁸¹

Anoia is the greatest evil because it opposes knowledge and reason, and is thus the greatest of disorders, ruining the soul and annihilating its power by tyranny.¹⁸² It is not mere foolishness. It is a disease of the soul – a weakness of mind – that can be manifested in two ways: ignorance and mania (madness).¹⁸³ When a soul is controlled by *anoia*, the beast and savage part craves to satisfy its own instincts, acting as it would in a dream, where the mind is released from all shame and reason and, in Plato's example, does not hesitate to copulate with its mother, or any man, god, or brute, shamelessly ready for any foul deed of blood.¹⁸⁴ It is reason and reason alone that can regulate this madness – a terrible, fierce and lawless brood of desires that is revealed in our sleep – that exists in every human being's mind, even the reputed respectable person.¹⁸⁵ Souls either are controlled by reason and are good and virtuous or suffer the disease of *anoia* wherein the soul is in discord, out of control, and is evil in the modern

¹⁸¹ *Leg.* 898C.

¹⁸² *Leg.* 689B, 691C; *Theaet.* 176E; *Resp.* 382C, 575C.

¹⁸³ *Tim.* 86B; *Resp.* 382C, E.

¹⁸⁴ *Resp.* 571C-D. Cf. *Theaet.* 157E, 158D, where dreams and disease cause illusions of sight and hearing, including insanity (*manian*).

¹⁸⁵ *Resp.* 572B.

interpretation of maniac.¹⁸⁶ No fool (*anoetos*) or madman is a friend of God, for madness is the opposite of wisdom.¹⁸⁷

The type of madness discussed above is that of a disease of the soul. There is another type, which is that of divine madness, having four distinct kinds associated with release from customary habits, all of which are gifts from God.¹⁸⁸ One type of divine madness is that whereby the afflicted person, inspired and out of his or her senses, seems to chant an oracle or recite something that is indicative of the fact that they are completely out of their wits, putting forth their interpretations of utterances of the gods. The listeners, for their part, are free to interpret these utterances themselves, as interpreters of interpreters.¹⁸⁹

Sin

Plato is concerned throughout his works with the shortcomings of human nature that, if not corrected, can preclude a reward in heaven after death. Plato at one point summarized his notion of sin succinctly: God is righteous, holy and wise. If a person knows this and likewise tries to be righteous, then he or she is

¹⁸⁶ *Phaedr.* 93B. The notion of beasts that can devour the soul in *Phaedrus* and *Republic* was the "ultimate and principal source" used by the later Gnostics to form their tradition of the battle between mind and body that justified their encratite measures, according to Howard M. Jackson, *The Lion Becomes Man: The Gnostic Leontomorphic Creator and the Platonic Tradition* (Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1985), 183-87.

¹⁸⁷ *Resp.* 382E; [*Alcibiades 2*] 139B, 141B.

¹⁸⁸ See *Phaedr.* 244A, 265B, for discussion of the kinds of divine madness.

¹⁸⁹ *Ion* 534B-535A. Cf. 1 Cor 12:4-11, 14:4-25, concerning speaking in tongues.

wise and truly virtuous. If not, then the person is ignorant and this ignorance is folly (*amathia*) or manifest wickedness.¹⁹⁰

Sin, though, is involuntary, because the person involved invariably thinks that he or she is achieving a better good.¹⁹¹ Sin, then, arises out of ignorance, which is itself involuntary, and the worst, most dangerous, sin is thinking that one knows something when one does not.¹⁹² Sin (*hamartēma*) is a dishonor of the soul, and there are many ways to do it: (1) lauding one's own soul, (2) blaming others for one's own sins, exempting oneself, (3) giving way to pleasures contrary to the lawgiver, (4) not enduring but flinching from fear, hardship, and pain that are commended by the lawgiver, (5) deeming life at any price to be good, expecting somehow to be blessed in Hades anyway (6) honoring beauty above goodness, which is honoring body above soul, and (7) craving to acquire wealth ignobly and thus bartering away the soul for a handful of gold.¹⁹³

There are three basic categories of sin: (1) driven by passion or fear, with passion being contentious, pugnacious and irrational, (2) lured by pleasure or desire, and (3) tricked by false hopes and untrue beliefs regarding the attainment of the highest good. These can be further subdivided into overt and covert sins,

¹⁹⁰ *Theaet.* 176C.

¹⁹¹ *Apol.* 26A; *Meno* 78A-B; *Prot.* 345D-E; *Leg.* 731C, 734B, 860C; *Soph.* 230A; *Tim.* 86D-E.

¹⁹² [*Alc. Maj.*] 117D; *Prot.* 358C; *Leg.* 689A, 863C; *Resp.* 382B; *Gorg.* 466E-467A; *Ep.* 7.336B.

¹⁹³ *Leg.* 727B-728A.

with the latter, done under cover of darkness or deceit, being especially bad.¹⁹⁴

Murder, for example, can be driven by any of the aforementioned three categories of sinful behavior, but is most often, says Plato, due to lust that masters a soul made savage by desires.¹⁹⁵ Sexual lust is a particular disease of the soul.¹⁹⁶ In general, the most common sins are those lured by pleasure and desire, including lust. The wicked soul is insatiable for pleasures of the body, like a sieve.¹⁹⁷ The soul grows weak with wealth and loses virtue.¹⁹⁸ Food, pleasures, and gluttonies turn down the eye of the soul, to diminish the soul's true quest for divine knowledge.¹⁹⁹ People prefer to live in ignorance of the evils of excessive bodily pleasure, like lazy, guzzling, insensitive swine.²⁰⁰ The ignorant, desiring to over-gain on food, drink, wealth, and power, go through life drugged by the body, dizzy and drunken.²⁰¹ They go through life in this state, foolishly thinking that their bodily pleasures and subsequent pains are real, but they are not, and their ignorance is loathed by the gods.²⁰² Essentially, the eye of the soul, instead of

¹⁹⁴ *Leg.* 863B, 864B-C.

¹⁹⁵ *Leg.* 870A.

¹⁹⁶ *Tim.* 86D-E.

¹⁹⁷ *Gorg.* 493B. Cf. *Resp.* 442A.

¹⁹⁸ *Crit.* 121A.

¹⁹⁹ *Resp.* 519B; [*Alc. Maj.*] 147A; *Phaed.* 66C.

²⁰⁰ *Resp.* 535E; *Leg.* 819D; *Pol.* 266C. Cf. *Lovers* 134B.

²⁰¹ *Phaed.* 79C; *Leg.* 906C; *Resp.* 580E.

²⁰² *Phaed.* 83C; *Resp.* 382B, 586C; *Phileb.* 40C

searching for wisdom, is stuck in the barbaric slough described in the Orphic myth.²⁰³ These gluttonies incrust and weigh down the soul, and the fascination of the desires and pleasures of the body cause the hate of the shadowy, invisible divine world that is intelligible and tangible only to the philosopher.²⁰⁴ These sins are common with the multitude, says Plato:

Therefore, those who have no experience of reason or virtue, but are always occupied with feasts and the like, are brought down and then back up to the middle, as it seems, and wander in this way throughout their lives, never reaching beyond this to what is truly higher up, never looking up at it or being brought up to it, and so they aren't filled with that which really is and never taste any stable or pure pleasure. Instead, they always look down at the ground like cattle, and, with their heads bent over the dinner table; they feed, fatten, and fornicate. To outdo others in these things, they kick and butt them with iron horns and hooves, killing each other, because their desires are insatiable. For the part that they're trying to fill is like a vessel full of holes, and neither it nor the things they are trying to fill it with are among the things that are.²⁰⁵

Plato thus discusses the obvious sins of lust and intemperance. There is, however, a more subtle yet very sensitive area that Plato addresses concerning the love of family. The basic problem is that a father or mother tolerates immoral behavior from their offspring: even though a parent criticizes it privately, they tend to defend it publicly. So thus the parents are drawn into the adverse morality of their children. In short, the unconditional love and concern for their children's acquisition of prestige, power, and wealth weighs down the parent's soul. Or

²⁰³ *Resp.* 533D

²⁰⁴ *Resp.* 519A; *Phaed.* 81C; *Ep.* 7.335A-B.

²⁰⁵ *Resp.* 586A-B, G.M.A. Grube and C.D.C. Reeve, trans., "Republic," in Cooper, *Plato*, 1194.

conversely, a father's thrift that denies a son simple pleasures, which causes a hatred of the father by the son, may later result in the son's overindulging in pleasure or even lawlessness.²⁰⁶ To prevent a powerful or rich parent from corrupting their child in this way, Plato even considered raising all children in common, so that a father would not recognize his biological son, and a son would not recognize his father, thus resulting in equality without favoritism.²⁰⁷ Plato's conclusion is that each person should regard all others as their actual kinsmen; as brothers and sisters if of the same age, as parents if older, and as children if younger.²⁰⁸

In summary, Plato does not simply provide a list of proscribed behavior, but aims at its root cause, which is the tendency for the soul to be held captive to the lusts and addictions associated with bodily pleasures. Once entrapped by these desires, the will to pursue the path to divine knowledge becomes suppressed, and the goal soon forgotten.

²⁰⁶ *Resp.* 572C-E.

²⁰⁷ *Resp.* 457C-D, 461C-D. These passages that say that wives should be held in common have long been favorites of the critics of Plato. Indeed, Plato did explore the control of common property, wives and children as a possible cure for greed, promiscuity, and favoritism, respectively, in his utopist republic.

Philo, in his open admiration of the Essenes' avoidance of marriage, seems to agree, saying, "For he who is either fast-bound in the love-lures of his wife or under the stress of nature makes his children his first care ceases to be the same to others and unconsciously has become a different man and has passed from freedom to slavery," *Hypoth.* 11.14-17 (Colson, LCL).

²⁰⁸ *Tim.* 18 C-D; *Resp.* 461E.

The Forgiveness of Sins

In Plato's system, sin does not require forgiveness by God or human. If the root causes of sin are the anti-virtues of ignorance, cowardice, intemperance, or injustice in the soul, then a personal corrective and purification of some sort is needed, because these elements of wickedness are diseases of the soul.²⁰⁹ The purification for this type of disease begins with cross-questioning, which is not an admonishing as such, but a form of education wherein subjects are challenged on their high and obstinate opinions about themselves and reduced to a state of modesty by the questioners, often to the great pleasure of those who are able to listen.²¹⁰ For those sins that harm others, Plato placed great confidence in the public laws that would remedy the situation in a just way.²¹¹ For example, Plato recounts an old tale concerning a slave who is slain, stating that if the slayer continues to visit the same places that the victim had frequented, then the slain should haunt the slayer. But if the slayer purifies himself and stays away from the locations for a year, then the slain should pardon the slayer. That is, there are conditions where the victim must forgive the wrongdoer, provided that the latter

²⁰⁹ *Soph.* 228B-231B.

²¹⁰ *Soph.* 230B-D. Cf. *Resp.* 515D; *Symp.* 218A. Frederick Grant, *Roman Hellenism*, 116-17, considers that the idea of sin as pollution; that is, "something that needs not simply to be forgiven and forgotten but actually removed" is "a profound sense of the reality of sin." The "necessity for active and concrete steps to remove it" is shared by the New Testament and Greek religious thought.

²¹¹ *Leg.* 864C-867C. Book 9 of *Leg.* addresses these issues.

undergoes atonement and purification. If, however, the wrongdoer refuses or for any reason does not undergo purification, then the full penalties of the law will be enforced. Some crimes, such as the killing of a parent, have no purification and the convicted murderer shall be put to death and his dead, naked body dumped at a major crossroad of the city.²¹² Plato recognizes the need to turn from addiction to the passions toward the seeking of virtue and divine knowledge; that is, repentance. Repentance will not result in any sort of forgiveness, or removal/erasure of past sins, for, regardless of what follows at judgment after death, "every act has left its smirch upon his soul."²¹³ Philo agreed with this: "For in all the souls of the repentant there remain, in spite of all, the scars and prints of their old misdeeds."²¹⁴

Salvation

For Plato, sin is ignorance and salvation is associated with a turning (*strephō*) of the mind,²¹⁵ followed by purification (*katharsis*) and nourishment (*trephō*) of the soul by means of education into divine ways. This education may come about formally, as in a school of philosophy, or informally, as an intervention by a philosopher skilled in the process of saving people's souls.

²¹² *Leg.* 873B.

²¹³ *Gorg.* 524E-525A (Lamb, LCL).

²¹⁴ *Spec.* 1.103 (Colson, LCL).

²¹⁵ *Resp.* 518C, 519B. Cf. *Resp.* 330E. The New Testament uses the word *metanoō*, literally "with mind," as the conversion verb.

However, for a person stuck in the mud of addiction to bodily pleasures, it is almost impossible, without help, to awake, change, and begin to travel one of the few correct paths leading to salvation of the soul. Plato, more than any other classical philosopher, knew that salvation requires the intervention of a savior. Plato acknowledged the possibility of visitors from the divine, *daimonions*, or spiritual monitors, who can intervene into human affairs in attempt to turn a person's mind toward what is correct.²¹⁶ The *daimonion*, however, acts to oppose incorrect action; it does not tell a person what he or she should do.²¹⁷ Another type of savior mentioned by Plato within the *Myth of Er* is the messenger of revelation who claims to have access to the underworld and has a message from the gods there.²¹⁸ However, for the discussion herein, the saviors are all live human beings, lovers of wisdom inspired by the divine.

The Need for a Savior

The savior who must interact with the sinner in order to commence to bring about individual salvation can be any of three kinds: the knowledgeable

²¹⁶ *Apol.* 32D, 40A-B; *Euthyphr.* 3B; [*Alc. Maj.*] 103A; *Euthyd.* 272E; *Symp.* 202E. Thomas C. Brickhouse and Nicholas D. Smith, *Socrates on Trial* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 135, note that Socrates accepted his death sentence upon realizing that his *daimonion* was silent: "In any case, one does not need the full certainty of divine wisdom to follow a certain path of action with (at least qualified) confidence; belief buttressed by strong warrants and no contrary indications is quite enough."

²¹⁷ *Apol.* 31D. See Brickhouse & Smith, *Socrates on Trial*, 168: "In that sense, then, Socrates' *daimonion* is more like an alarm than a guide, for though it sometimes warns him of danger, it does not lead him to safety. So even with his *daimonion*, Socrates must find his own way in life."

²¹⁸ *Resp.* 614D. Cf. the rich man's request for a messenger to be sent to his brethren in Luke 16:27-31.

love advisor, the teacher of philosophy, or the righteous man on a mission. Each of the three savior interveners is associated with a particular path to salvation. All three paths lead to the same place.

The Savior as Love Advisor

The first savior type is that of the lover, or tutor of love, and the corresponding path to salvation is the path of love. This is a very high risk, high payoff way to salvation, a path that Plato could only dare to explain by placing Socrates in a drinking contest, a *symposium*, in the company of intelligent, heavy drinkers that included both heterosexual and homosexual men. This approach is found only in Plato's *Symposium*, which is titled after a common way for men to affiliate that involves round after round of speeches and toasts with wine.²¹⁹ Socrates gave a speech after nearly everyone else had spoken. The subject of the evening was love, not *philia*, the family kind, nor *agapē*, the group kind, but *Eros*, the individual, sexual kind. Eros had been personified by the Greeks, and is equivalent to whom the later Romans called Cupid. Socrates relates a speech that had been delivered to him, apparently when he was much younger, by Diotima, a goddess of love who had gave Socrates a lesson on love matters.²²⁰ Diotima commences by saying that Eros is a great spirit (*daimonion*), acting in the area between divine and mortal, and part of the means for gods to converse

²¹⁹ Nehamas, *Virtues of Authenticity*, 304.

²²⁰ *Symp.* 201D.

with men and men with gods. The god Eros has Resource as father and Poverty as mother, thus Eros is always poor, not beautiful, yet always scheming for the beautiful and good. That is, he is never wealthy, but never without the resources to try to get what he wants. Eros is a brave, impetuous, high-strung spirit who will do whatever is necessary to get his way, and even use witchcraft, jugglery, and artful speech. Eros is desirous of wisdom and competent with it, and always striving after the truth.²²¹

Many view Eros, says Diotima, as simply the sex drive to impart pregnancy and thus a form of immortality through descendants. But the drive of Eros is much more general than just sexual, for it seeks immortality by giving creativity to poets, craftsmen, and inventors, and the craving for knowledge to philosophers who seek immortality through the learning of divine things.²²² As Nehamas says:

This, in a way, is one of the most crucial ideas presented in the *Symposium*, and it governs all that follows in Socrates' speech: philosophy, the pursuit of wisdom, is motivated by love; it is, in fact, love's highest expression.²²³

Eros, therefore, is the drive given mankind to cause humans to pursue the knowledge of the divine, thus to be able to return to the heavenly realm; however, Eros is mishandled by the multitude to represent sexual drive without realization of its much more important use. One might paraphrase the argument

²²¹ *Symp.* 203B-D.

²²² *Symp.* 208E-209B. See *Phaedr.* 249D for the divine madness of Eros.

²²³ Nehamas, *Virtues of Authenticity*, 309.

of Diotima and Socrates to ask: If, then, Eros, the sex drive, is also the drive for wisdom, then why not "rev up" the sex drive engines, and when they are at full throttle, attempt make a jump from love of bodies to love of wisdom? This is basically the formula given by Plato. Remember, it was earlier said that this path was high risk with a potentially high return on the investment, not unlike the odds and payoff of the gaming tables.

The details of the path are known as the Ladder of Love, a ladder having five or six rungs, according to interpretation.²²⁴ The first rung is the love of one particular person, with whom, besides love of his or her body, there must be intimate conversation about beauty. It is critically necessary to be taught beforehand by a savior-guide love advisor, the path itself and the meaning of all of the rungs. The transition to the second rung will bring about the realization that the partner's beautiful body is part and parcel of a much greater beauty.²²⁵ The second rung is the realization that all beautiful bodies are connected to absolute beauty, and the lover should now begin to love them all, slackening the interest for the original person.²²⁶ The engines are now at full throttle, with the lover in love with the state of being in love, and desirous of still greater beauty.

²²⁴ Cf. *Ep.* 7.343E, the methodical stages of study, from one to another, up and down. Philo also envisaged this use of a ladder metaphor in *Praem.* 43-46.

²²⁵ Socrates himself needed this instruction from Diotima in *Symp.* 207C. Diotima says initiation, instruction and a conductor are needed in 210A. The lover must be constrained to contemplate the laws in 210C, must turn to the great sea of beauty in 210D, and is tutored in 210E. *Resp.* 479E mentions those who view beautiful things but do not see the beautiful itself, being unable to follow another's guidance to it.

²²⁶ *Symp.* 210A-B.

The third rung requires the realization that there are beautiful souls that are of even higher value than beautiful bodies. The sexual love has now largely faded. It is important to realize that other souls are wonderful to converse with. They may be the lover's children, and it is important to love them and seek to give birth to ideas for making them better. This leads to the fourth rung, which is the realization of the beauty in communities and their laws and customs. The desire for education into divine matters is now in effect. At the end of this stage, the love of another body's beauty seems a trifle, for the lover is at the fifth rung, gazing on the great sea of beauty of knowledge, whose contemplation brings forth many fruits of discourse and meditation. It is from the strength and growth of knowledge at this vantage point that the lover might just catch a sudden (*exaiphnēs*) evasive, wonderful view of the absolute beauty.²²⁷ When this vision happens, all of the previous bodily loves will be outshined, never to be important again. True virtue has now arrived, and, when death does later occur, the destiny of Heaven awaits the lover's immortal soul.²²⁸

²²⁷ *Symp.* 210E, "Suddenly he will have revealed to him . . . a wondrous vision" (Lamb, LCL). For the *suddenness* of the mystic vision, see *Ep.* 7.341D, "brought to birth in the soul on a sudden (*exaiphnēs*), as light that is kindled by a leaping spark, and thereafter it nourishes itself" (Lamb, LCL). This term does not mean *quickly*, but indicates a state change between motion and rest, or between the intelligible and sensual worlds, especially dealing with a divine vision. See *Resp.* 515C, 516E, 621B, for *sudden* enlightenment. *Parm.* 156D-E uses the term as applying to the One. *Parm.* 164D says the *sudden* change is "like something in a dream."

In the New Testament, *exaiphnēs* is invariably associated with a divine revelation or intervention. Note Jesus' statement about the *sudden* (*exaiphnēs*) presence of the Kingdom of God in Mark 13:32-36. See Luke 2:13, "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host; Luke 9:39, "Suddenly a spirit seizes him;" and Acts 9:3 and 22:6, about a light from heaven.

²²⁸ *Symp.* 210C-E, 211C.

The Philosopher-Teacher as Savior

The fact that Plato saw the teacher of philosophy as being necessary to keep students pursuing divine knowledge on the straight path is prevalent through most of Plato's books. The teaching of a student and its rewards are said best by Plato as follows:

To such persons one must point out what the subject is as a whole, and what its character and how many preliminary subjects it entails and how much labor. For on hearing this, if the pupil is truly philosophic, in sympathy with the subject and worthy of it, because divinely gifted, he believes that he has been shown a marvelous pathway (*odos*) and that he must brace himself at once to follow it, and that life will not be worth living if he does otherwise. After this he braces both himself and him who is guiding him on the path (*odos*), nor does he desist until either he has reached the goal of all his studies, or else has gained such power as to be capable of directing his own steps without the aid of the instructor.²²⁹

Even the divinely gifted student requires a teacher to inspire and bring out the knowledge. The beginning relationship between teacher and pupil is critical. The teacher is laying down the keel of the ship to be built by the student, or framing the shape of the pupil's life according to the modes of their soul.²³⁰ Virtue, even though it is knowledge, may or may not be teachable, but it can be

²²⁹ *Ep.* 7.340C-D (Bury, LCL). The Greek tradition has the prime example of Odysseus seeking the soul of Teiresias the Theban, a dead, blind prophet in Hades, as his savior (Homer, *Od.* 11.90-152). This is the prototype salvation message, where Odysseus' desired homecoming is analogous to the human soul reaching its ultimate home in Heaven after a long-suffering journey. Teiresias' instruction to Odysseus was that he would have a sweet homecoming if and only if he (1) contained his own desire (*thymos*) and that of his comrades, (2) underwent many suffering hardships, and (3) resolved to offer later as penance a sacrifice to Poseidon.

The soul's labors to return to home, similar to the return journey of Odysseus, is discussed by Philo in *QG* 3.10, as a "sojourner in a land not its own." See also Sterling, *Ancestral Philosophy*, 29. Cf. Plutarch, *Mor.* 7.45-46.

²³⁰ *Leg.* 803A-B.

brought out from its hiding by a good teacher.²³¹ A concerned instructor can unwrap the mist from around a pupil's soul.²³² Only the young and foolish would dream that they have no use for a guide, yet feel competent to guide others.²³³ Of course, the teacher must carefully select his pupils, accepting only those free from evils and desires.²³⁴ Good teachers are very rare, the bad are plentiful.²³⁵ The student should entreat to the gods to find good masters, only thus may he or she find salvation.²³⁶ It is imperative that the prospective student should seek after the teacher who will impart the ability and the knowledge to distinguish the life that is good from that which is bad.²³⁷

The Righteous Person on a Mission as Savior

For this path, the savior uses force to compel the initiate to turn his or her mind and undergo purification (*katharsis*). This catharsis, however, is neither that of the old Orphic religion that was effected for the remission of sins by means of sacrifice for the purpose of deliverance from the evils waiting in the other world,

²³¹ *Prot.* 361A-B; *Tim.* 44C; *Gorg.* 527E; *Meno* 99E.

²³² [*Alcibiades 2*], 150D.

²³³ *Leg.* 716A, 808D. Cf. *Phaed.* 108A.

²³⁴ *Crat.* 404A; *Ep.* 7.340D-E, 345D-E.

²³⁵ *Phaed.* 78A; *Ep.* 7.341C-D.

²³⁶ *Mem.* 1.5.5.

²³⁷ *Resp.* 618B-C.

nor that associated with the priests of Delphi.²³⁸ Plato's catharsis that is to occur after the forced turning, rather, acts to remove the sin of ignorance by means of education. In this way, every "turned" soul can be purified and kindled afresh by studies, by learning the habits of collecting itself and, as much as possible, by freeing itself from the fetters of the body via philosophy.²³⁹

In the Allegory of the Cave, Plato emphasizes this path. The person who left the cave to rise into the light was forced, or compelled by force (*bia*) up the ascent of the cave, to undergo the necessary catharsis.²⁴⁰ This is a forced conversion, which must turn (*strephō*) both body and soul around until it is able to endure the enlightenment.²⁴¹ It is futile to attempt to resist this conversion and purification, which is like being grabbed and dragged; it must be followed wherever it leads.²⁴² This turning of the mind, or conversion, by the forced facing of the truth is the quick path, the shortcut to heaven, provided that the savior doing the compelling is skilled in the practice:

Of this very thing, then," I said, "there might be an art, an art of the speediest and most effective shifting or conversion (*metastrephō*) of the soul, not an art of producing vision in it, but on the assumption that it possesses vision but does not rightly direct it and does not look where it should, an art of bringing this about."²⁴³

²³⁸ *Resp.* 364E. Cf. *Phaedr.* 243A; *Leg.* 759C, 865D, 868A, 881E; *Euthyphr.* 4C.

²³⁹ *Resp.* 527D; *Phaed.* 67B-C, 82D; Xenophon, *Symp.* 1.4.

²⁴⁰ For examples of turning as conversion, see *Resp.* 515A, C, E, 516A. Cf. *Phaed.* 64E; *Symp.* 210D; *Phaedr.* 257B.

²⁴¹ *Resp.* 515D, 518C, 519B; *Phaed.* 82D.

²⁴² *Phaed.* 82D, 83B; *Resp.* 515E.

²⁴³ *Resp.* 518D, (Shorey, LCL).

Note that this “art” is not one of a gentle philosopher who produces this vision of love, beauty, and goodness within the person converted; rather, it is the upfront, initial act of conversion by force.²⁴⁴ The Allegory of the Cave, however, is not just about a quick and forced conversion by turning of the mind. It is also followed by a painful educational experience for the convert, often occurring only after a period of suffering. The change itself causes pain and suffering, not unlike being blinded by direct sunlight after dwelling in a dimly lit cave.²⁴⁵

This isn't, it seems, a matter of tossing a coin, but of turning (*peristrophē*) a soul from a day that is a kind of night to the true day – the ascent to what is, which we say is true philosophy.²⁴⁶

The righteous person acting as savior will also undergo suffering, and might be killed by those whom he or she is trying to convert. Those who are unjust might force the just would-be savior to endure chains, the lash or rack, a branding iron in the eyes, and ultimately, the act of crucifixion.²⁴⁷

The suffering that is uniquely associated with the initiation into philosophy comes about by means of the dialectic,²⁴⁸ which gently draws forth the eye of the soul from the barbaric slough of the Orphic myth, and leads it up, using the help

²⁴⁴ Philosophers, however, can apply mental force through dialectic examination, to cause a shift in focus from sensible things to that of abstracts or the Forms. Plato relates the study of geometry to a shift of this nature, when the physical sight and feel of objects gives way to the abstract mathematics involved (*Resp.* 509D-510E). It is valid to consider the conversion by force associated with the savior of Plato's Allegory of the Cave to be the action of a philosopher who drags the student into enlightenment.

²⁴⁵ *Resp.* 515E-516A.

²⁴⁶ *Resp.* 521C, Grube & Reeve, trans., in Cooper, *Plato*, 1138.

²⁴⁷ *Resp.* 361E-362A, 517A.

²⁴⁸ *Resp.* 533D.

of the studies and sciences. The suffering itself occurs by means of *elenchus*, the severe questioning that demands him or her to say what is reality.²⁴⁹ *Elenchus* used on the beginning philosopher can be expected to result in *aporia*, that is, confusion, a foggy head, or at least, if the potential philosopher is trained, silence.²⁵⁰ This is an ongoing process, essentially the scientific method of hypothesize and test, whereby the novice philosopher's notions about reality are tested under severe conditions, and are either scrubbed or revised accordingly until they either stand or stay fallen. Those asking the questions are the philosophers and teachers who have already successfully undergone the same process. This cross-questioning, the greatest and most effective of all purifications (catharsis), will reduce the erudite student to modesty by removing obstructive opinions and purge the student of thinking that he or she knows what they do not know.²⁵¹

The person who endures the *elenchus* is on the path to the acquisition of divine knowledge, and will likely become a questioner of later initiates. It is critical to realize that the enlightened must descend into the cave again, in attempt to teach those who are ignorant of divine knowledge.²⁵² It is dangerous work, and

²⁴⁹ *Resp.* 515D.

²⁵⁰ *Phaedr.* 276A.

²⁵¹ *Soph.* 230C-E. *Elenchus* was, of course, the specialty of Socrates, ref. *Meno* 80A, 84B-C; *Theaet.* 149A; *Apol.* 23D. See *Resp.* 533B, that says dialectics is the only "valid way of inquiry that attempts systematically and in all cases to determine what each thing really is." Jesus, like Socrates, also effectively employed a form of dialectic that approached *elenchus*.

²⁵² *Resp.* 519D, 520C, 539E.

the teacher may be killed.²⁵³ In fact, like Socrates, the teacher of divine wisdom may be thrown into prison, tried in a biased court that does not understand the philosopher's mission, and sentenced to death.²⁵⁴

Of the three paths, the latter path through forced conversion clearly involves the minimum time and effort on the part of the saved person, but requires a big and dangerous effort by the compelling savior himself, and a subsequent period of very hard work by the philosopher-teacher who is dishing out the *elenchus*.²⁵⁵ The first two paths require at least a commitment and commencement of the long educational process of hard study and dialectic *before* the turning of the soul and "sudden" sight of God. The third path *begins* with a forced conversion, followed by dedication for the rest of one's life to some form of the process of acquiring as much divine knowledge as possible.²⁵⁶ All three paths require growth in divine knowledge, which is the process, for a philosopher, of purification.

²⁵³ *Resp.* 517A.

²⁵⁴ *Gorg.* 486A-B, 521C.

²⁵⁵ The person who has mastered the art of forcefully compelling the ignorant subject is of a different ilk than the subsequent person who has the persuasive philosophical skills to conduct the *elenchus*. The separate roles of John the Baptist and Jesus come to mind here.

²⁵⁶ In *Resp.* 539E, Plato mentions a five year program in dialectic education.

The Kingdom of the Philosophers

Reason (*logos*) is the king (*basilikos*) of the philosophers, and a proclaiming person will be tracked down and caught in the king's name:

For assuredly neither he nor any other creature will ever boast of having escaped from pursuers who are able to follow up in the pursuit in detail and everywhere in this methodical way.²⁵⁷

By this passage, Reason, the power of God, is the king of the philosophers; hence it can be concluded that God's kingdom must be God's wisdom as approached by human reason and all elements of philosophy such as *logos* and *elenchus*. It seems valid to interpret this passage to mean that to enter the philosophical arena is to enter the Kingdom of God. Plato did not precisely define the Kingdom of God *per se*, but it is clear that it includes God's Reason, divine knowledge, human reason, and the human soul, all of the invisible, intellectual world. The human soul can also be considered to be within the Kingdom of God, because studies and pursuit of true discourses (*logos*) are the best watchmen and guardians of the citadel of the soul, itself a kingly fortress (*basilikou teichous*) within.²⁵⁸ It is the existence of reason (*nous*) in the soul

²⁵⁷ *Soph.* 235B-C, (Fowler, LCL). Reason, the mind and power of God, is the king of the philosophers; hence it can be concluded that God's kingdom is God's wisdom as approached by human reason through elements of philosophy such as *logos* and *elenchus*. This passage can be interpreted to mean that to enter the philosophical arena is to enter the Kingdom of God.

²⁵⁸ *Resp.* 560B-C.

(*psychē*), in union with the finest senses that is the salvation (*sōtēria*) of any living creature.²⁵⁹

The Growth of the Soul by Divine Knowledge

Plato, in many places, uses the simple metaphor of plant growth to signify growth of the soul by knowledge. He also uses the metaphor of seed to signify the word, or the divine soul and knowledge that God has written in the mind of the hearer.²⁶⁰ Divine Reason has sown (*speirō*) the immortal soul into bodies and given them divine food that they may grow (*auxanō*), later to receive them back again.²⁶¹ The growing of wisdom is difficult, like tending a plant.²⁶² The philosophic nature, with the proper teaching, will grow (*auxanō*) to excellence, but if sown (*speirō*) or grown (*trephō*) wrong, the outcome will be quite to the contrary unless some god comes to the rescue.²⁶³ It is the task of a philosopher, using the dialectic method, to plant and sow (*speirō*) in a fitting soul (*psychē*) intelligent words (*epistēmēs logous*) helpful to both the souls of the giver and

²⁵⁹ *Leg.* 961D. "(T)he soul is the seat of reason" (Saunders, trans., in Cooper, *Plato*, 1609).

²⁶⁰ *Phaedr.* 276A-B, "the living and breathing word of him who knows;" *Tim.* 41D, 42D; *Lovers* 134E.

²⁶¹ *Tim.* 41D. Epicharmus of Syracuse, writing around 480 B. C., said "The Logos steers men and ever preserves them in the right way. Man has the power of calculation, but there is also the divine Logos. Human reasoning is sprung from the divine Logos, which furnishes to each man the passageway of both life and nourishment," in Clement, *Strom.* 5.14.3, Phillip Wheelwright, trans., in *Heraclitus* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 23.

²⁶² *Theages* 121B-C, Nicholas D. Smith, trans., "Theages," in Cooper, *Plato*, 627-638. It is generally agreed that this is not Plato's work, but represents a later Platonic author.

²⁶³ *Resp.* 492A.

receiver. When the resultant growth is not fruitless but yields more seeds to be planted in other minds for ever, it is the farthest possible limit of human happiness.²⁶⁴ Conversely, the best endowed souls become worse than the others under a bad education; it is true of every seed (*sperma*) and growth that the more vigorous it is the more it falls short of its perfect growth (*trephō*) when deprived of the right food, season, or location.²⁶⁵ A good father will grow (*auxanō*) the rational principle (*logistikos*) in the soul (*psychē*) of a son.²⁶⁶ Some of the possessions of knowledge grow (*gignomai*) in a soul, while others perish.²⁶⁷ The souls of uneducated slaves become small because they are deprived of growth (*auxanō*).²⁶⁸ There is nothing more important to gods and men than the cultivation of the soul.²⁶⁹ Seeking intelligence and truth and attaining to knowledge grows (*trephō*) the divine part of the soul.²⁷⁰ Sophists claim to sell divine knowledge and doctrine to nourish (*trephō*) the soul, but they do not.²⁷¹ Divine knowledge, like the Sun, causes nurture (*trophē*) and growth

²⁶⁴ *Phaedr.* 276E-277A. The mission of a philosopher is to plant intelligent words in others.

²⁶⁵ *Resp.* 491D. Cf. *Euthypr.* 2D-3A. *Trephō* is shown here for the verb and also for its associated noun *trophes* (nurture). Jesus related the product of a bad education to weeds sown in an otherwise good field of wheat: *Matt.* 13:24-43; *Gos. Thom.* 57.

²⁶⁶ *Resp.* 550B.

²⁶⁷ *Symp.* 207E.

²⁶⁸ *Theaet.* 173A.

²⁶⁹ *Phaedr.* 241C.

²⁷⁰ *Resp.* 490B.

²⁷¹ *Prot.* 313C-F. Cf. *Soph.* 222E.

(*auxanō*) of the soul.²⁷² Humans are, after all, heavenly plants growing toward heaven, from where our head is suspended.²⁷³ The soul can be grown (*auxanō*) to the knowledge of the absolute Beauty.²⁷⁴ Our soul is further nourished (*trephō*) by gazing on the divine Ideas.²⁷⁵ The soul takes with it to the other world nothing but its education and its nurture (*trephō*).²⁷⁶

In the great myth of the *Phaedrus*, the growth of the soul is expressed as the growth of the wings of the soul, those functions that allow the soul of a living person to soar up to heaven and catch a glimpse of the divine Ideas. The wings, the best part of the soul, are nourished (*trephō*) by beauty and truth.²⁷⁷

From the overwhelming quantity and quality of the above uses by Plato, it can be safely concluded, at the very least, that salvation of the soul involves education and the love and pursuit of divine wisdom, through virtue, and that the soul somehow grows as this education progresses.

Four hundred years later, Seneca, himself quite familiar with Plato's works, said:

Words should be scattered like seed; no matter how small the seed may be, if it has once found favorable ground, it unfolds its strength and from an insignificant thing spreads to its greatest growth.

²⁷² *Resp.* 509B.

²⁷³ *Tim.* 90A.

²⁷⁴ *Symp.* 210D. The Beauty of music can grow (*trephō*) the young soul (*Resp.* 401E).

²⁷⁵ *Phaedr.* 247D.

²⁷⁶ *Phaedr.* 107D.

²⁷⁷ *Phaedr.* 248B-C. Cf. 249D, 255D.

Reason (*ratio*) grows in the same way; it is not large to the outward view, but increases as it does its work. Few words are spoken; but if the mind has truly caught them, they come into their strength and spring up. Yes, percepts and seeds have the same quality; they produce much, and yet they are slight things. Only, as I said, let a favorable mind receive and assimilate them. Then of itself the mind also will produce bounteously in its turn, giving back more than it has received.²⁷⁸

Plato's use of the verb *auxanō* to indicate soul growth is important in regard to the New Testament because both Mark and Matthew use the word for the growth of the seed of Reason within Jesus' parable of *The Sower*. In fact, all of Jesus' "parables of growth" can be interpreted as growth of the soul as nourished with divine reason. Paul uses the verb *auxanō* to connote growth of the soul in the "infants in Christ," made to grow by God.²⁷⁹ The New Testament book of Hebrews uses *trephō* to describe those who have progressed in spiritual growth, to be able to distinguish good from evil.²⁸⁰ The words for seed, *sperma*, and sowing of the seed, *speirō*, are used in several metaphors, including Jesus' parable of *The Sower*. *Sperma* is also used by Paul, saying that God provides both the seed and the bread for food, for multiplying the seed to increase (*auxanō*) the fruits of righteousness.²⁸¹

²⁷⁸ Seneca, *Ep.* 38.2 (Gummere, LCL). See also Burton L. Mack, *A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 159-60, for discussion of sowing as metaphor for *paideia*.

²⁷⁹ Mark 4:8; Matt 13:32, 6:28; 1 Cor. 3:6, 7.

²⁸⁰ Heb. 5:12, 14.

²⁸¹ 2 Cor. 9:10. Paul correctly equated the seed and the nourishment of the seed, which together constitutes the growth action of divine Reason within the soul.

Some knowledge, however, is not true, for a person can learn things that are wrong. To show this, Plato describes the soul as like an aviary, wherein all sorts of birds are kept. The birds represent varieties of knowledge. When a person is a child, the aviary is empty, and as a person grows up, the number of birds grows as a person acquires or discovers knowledge. But it is one thing to possess knowledge, and another thing actually to have it at hand. When trying to recapture or take hold of a bird, though, it can happen that a bird of a wrong sort gets captured. This can be a dreadful disaster, for ignorance can fly around alongside knowledge, and the person who captures the wrong kind will nevertheless think it to be true. Reason, however, may be able to separate the two.²⁸²

Eschatology

Afterlife and Reincarnation

Plato offers an option of belief in the afterlife: that of either eternal reward of a soul in Heaven versus eternal punishment in Tartarus, or that of reincarnation/transmigration. Virtually all scholars have concluded that Plato, and the historical Socrates before him, believed that the soul has a life beyond the grave.²⁸³ Souls that are overly attached to other people, especially offspring, tend

²⁸² *Theaet.* 197C-201D.

²⁸³ McPherran, *Religion of Socrates*, 252, lists the major scholars.

to hang around earth for a while and look after their children.²⁸⁴ In any case, the soul of the dead person migrates to another world where soon justice is served by judges who review the soul of the dead person and decide its future.²⁸⁵ The souls that are corrupted by sin so thoroughly that they are incurable are punished in Tartarus for eternity.²⁸⁶ A strongly recurring and consistent theme of Plato's is the notion that those souls, and *only* those, that have been purified by philosophy mount to the place of the Blessed, which we can safely identify with Heaven.²⁸⁷ Plato offers the possibility of reincarnation only for those souls that are in between the two defined areas of judgment; that is, neither largely good nor bad.

Plato described the concepts of reincarnation that were popular in his day, all being attributed to the Pythagorean/Orphic influence.²⁸⁸ Plato acknowledged the Orphic teachings, and tied them to Pindar, who "is the 5th century poet who apparently was most fascinated by the eschatological myth of the Orphic

²⁸⁴ *Leg.* 927A.

²⁸⁵ *Apol.* 40E-41C; *Crito* 54B; *Resp.* 614C-D; *Phaed.* 113D-E; *Phaedr.* 249A-B; *Leg.* 959B; *Gorg.* 523E. 527A.

²⁸⁶ *Gorg.* 525C-E; *Resp.* 616A; *Phaed.* 113E.

²⁸⁷ *Gorg.* 526E; *Phaed.* 69C-D, 82A-D, 114C; *Tim.* 42B, 42D; *Leg.* 904D; *Resp.* 619E. That only the philosopher can ascend to the divine light or view the eternal Ideas, see *Resp.* 490B, 500B-C, 516B, 517B, 518C-D; *Phaed.* 114C; *Symp.* 212A; *Theaet.* 176B.

²⁸⁸ See McPherran, *Religion of Socrates*, 268. See also Werner Jaeger, "The Greek Ideas of Immortality," *HTR* 52 (July 1959): 140; Norman Gulley, *The Philosophy of Socrates* (New York: St. Martin's, 1968), 195; and John Alexander Stewart, *The Myths of Plato* (London: Macmillan, 1905), 64-71.

religion."²⁸⁹ Plato could not easily ignore or refute this popular notion of reincarnation within his books.

What Plato did, however, was to slant greatly the playing field to insure that if a person did not choose the salvation of philosophy, then even if reincarnated, the future would be very bleak. In fact, the only fair chance to earn an eternal reward, as a philosopher, is that of the first incarnation. If the first fails to qualify a person for the eternal reward, then all subsequent incarnations are on a slippery slope of increased difficulty. For example, in the Myth of Er, Plato described righteous, virtuous men who had made it to heaven as a reward for the initial incarnation and remained there for the allotted time of a thousand years. However, when it came time to pick their life for the next incarnation, they invariably chose badly, having had no training in philosophy, and were sure to end up in Tartarus after the second incarnation, likely to continue in this manner forever.²⁹⁰

Plato's description of transmigration offers little to look forward to, either. In the *Phaedrus* myth, unlike that of the *Republic*, the future lives are predetermined instead of chosen. The first incarnation is that of a philosopher or lover of beauty, the second incarnation is that of a king or warlike ruler, the third a politician, man of business, or financier, then a gymnast, then a prophet, then a

²⁸⁹ Jaeger, "Greek Ideas," 141. He says that the idea of migration of the soul is implied in Pindar's eschatology. See *Crat.* 400C; *Meno* 81A-B; *Resp.* 364E-365A.

²⁹⁰ *Resp.* 619D.

poet or artist, then a craftsman or husbandman, then a tyrant.²⁹¹ Clearly, the likelihood of becoming a philosopher after the first incarnation diminishes rapidly. In the myth of *Timaeus*, the prospects for transmigration are much worse. The initial incarnation is that of a man. The second life is that of a woman. After that, the incarnations are into beasts, according to suitability.²⁹² A beast does not have human reason, and could not possibly learn philosophy. Plato's overwhelming message regarding the afterlife is: ***learn philosophy or else***.

Plato states his doctrine that only a philosopher can obtain salvation and receive his eternal reward throughout the dialogs in argument and logical exposition. Reincarnation, however, is stated only with reference to myth attributed to either Pindar or priests and priestesses of old.²⁹³

In the *Meno*, Socrates allows for the notion of reincarnation, with no mention of reward or punishment, as evidence that the soul has been born many times and has acquired knowledge of everything. The poem of Pindar that Plato quotes glorifies reincarnation, saying that the souls restored into bodies are those of splendid and wise men, kings and heroes, which is the complete antithesis of the slippery slope of reincarnation that Plato brings out elsewhere. Clearly, Plato does not follow Pindar's notion of a typically happy reincarnation. The thrust of

²⁹¹ *Phaedr.* 248C-E. For the notion that trade and the arts are ungentlemanly and incompatible with philosophy, see *Resp.* 495E, 522B, 590C; *Leg.* 919C; *Lovers* 137B. For problems with being a gymnast, see *Resp.* 521E.

²⁹² *Tim.* 42B-C.

²⁹³ The great myths at *Phaedr.* 248C; *Resp.* 614B; and *Tim.* 41E-42D, 90E. Cf. *Leg.* 870E, "those who return again," and the playful harbinger to the later Myth of Er in *Resp.* 498D. "that will profit them when they come to life in which they will be born again" (Shorey, LCL).

the argument in this *Meno* dialog is to prove that a person can acquire all knowledge by remembering only one thing, the act of learning itself, and hence able to discover everything else with an energetic and inquiring attitude. But Socrates' conclusion, despite his use of the Pindar myth, is that a person ought to live all his or her life in the utmost holiness and in the pursuit of wisdom.²⁹⁴

Plato, unlike Pindar, nowhere describes reincarnation in positive terms, nor shows it as a reward for suffering endured in a previous life. The inconsistency between Plato's discussion of reincarnation in the *Timaeus* and the *Republic* reflect the view that he does not take the concept of reincarnation seriously, and certainly does not say that it is a desirable thing for which to hope. The least negative view of reincarnation is in the Myth of Er, where Plato says that there is a good chance that the souls prior to being reborn may chose the life of philosophy and thus get off the endless wheel of reincarnation and go to Heaven.²⁹⁵

Finally, it is necessary to reflect on the aforementioned discourse on the failure of Socrates, in the *Phaedo*, to convince Cebes of the validity or reincarnation using logical debate. What is of great importance in this lengthy debate is that it can hardly be said that the notion of reincarnation, although always presented within several myths, was a firm doctrine of Plato's theology. In

²⁹⁴ *Meno* 81A-E. See also *Tim.* 41E-42A, where Plato says that each soul was shown the nature of the Universe and imparted with divine knowledge at the beginning, thus not requiring earlier incarnations in order to attain all knowledge.

²⁹⁵ *Resp.* 619 E.

fact, it was little more than speculation that could not be ignored by Plato because of its immense popularity at the time, and it does not seem that Plato considered it to be a valid doctrine.²⁹⁶ If the entire notion of reincarnation, as described by Plato, is discarded, very little of his systematic theology is lost. What is very clear, however, is that after the death of the body, the soul goes on to dwell in another world.²⁹⁷ What is also clear is that only by philosophy will a soul reach its eternal reward.

The Communion of the Saints

Plato explained that the afterlife of the soul of a philosopher or righteous person includes meeting with either wise or famous men who lost their lives through an unjust judgment. In the *Apology*, Socrates delights and looks forward to *elenchus* with other wise men in the wonderful afterlife, especially Orpheus, Musaeus, Hesiod, and Homer, but also hopes to commiserate with fellow heroic victims of unjust verdicts such as Palamedes, Ajax, and Odysseus.²⁹⁸ In the *Republic*, Socrates describes Heaven as a *symposium* of the saints, where,

²⁹⁶ In *Resp.* 617E, internal to the Myth of Er, Plato speaks of souls that "live for a day" in the cycle of mortal generation where birth is the beacon of death. Cf. *Leg.* 923A, where the term "creatures for a day" is not tied to reincarnation. In *Meno* 81B-C, the idea of reincarnation does not stem from logic, but from certain priests and priestesses, Pindar and the poets. In *Tim.* 91A-92C, the reincarnation into women, birds, beasts, fish, etc. is given as a "likely account."

²⁹⁷ *Phaed.* 107A. See *Ep.* 7.335B-C, when the wrong-doer goes beneath the earth on a journey that is unhonored and in all ways utterly miserable. See also *Apol.* 40C, where Socrates says that death is either nothingness or "a change and migration of the soul from this to another place," without mention of reincarnation. Aristotle had concluded that Plato's use of "the Pythagorean myths" about the soul's migration into different bodies is absurd (*De an.* 407B).

²⁹⁸ *Apol.* 41A-B.

reclined on couches and crowned with wreathes, the souls of the heroes and saints drink wine as in an everlasting drunk. This is the good afterlife.²⁹⁹

At the end of Book IX of the *Republic*, Plato places one of his most famous passages for Christians, the ideal City of God in heaven that can be viewed only by contemplation by the pious. When this city is beheld by contemplation, then the beholder becomes a citizen of the heavenly city.³⁰⁰ This passage was the archetype for Augustine's *City of God* and may have influenced Jesus' idea of the Kingdom of God as a divine city entered into only by the pious.

Plato's Apocalyptic Myths

The *Politicus* myth offers an outstanding example of apocalyptic thought, the prototype for all others of its ilk, concerning what happens at the end of time. When time turns backward, the sick get better, the blind see again, the lame walk again, newborn babies are returned to their womb, those who have spent or lost money get it back, big earthquakes happen, etc., and the dead rise from their graves. Plato explains that things go much quicker in reverse than in forward, with an entire life replayed backwards in only a few days.³⁰¹ Consider these two passages of the *Politicus* myth:

²⁹⁹ *Resp.* 363C-D. Jesus also looked forward to drinking wine in the Kingdom of God after his death (Luke 22:18; Matt 26:29; Mark 14:25) and meeting with the Jewish heroes Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Luke 13:28, 14:15, 22:16; Matt 8:11).

³⁰⁰ *Resp.* 592A-B.

³⁰¹ *Pol.* 271A.

After the old men who go back to childhood, there follow in their turn the men who are already dead and lying in their graves; these begin therein to be compacted anew out of their elements, and when his time cometh unto each of them in the cycle of generation whose motion is contrary to the former motion, he rises from the dead.³⁰²

Then was the Universe shaken as with a great earthquake through his depths by reason of the concussion of the reversed revolution and the strife betwixt the two contrary motions whereof the one was ending and the other beginning; whereby was wrought a fresh destruction of living creatures of every kind.³⁰³

The corollary to this myth is that when one sees former actions being reversed, one can conclude that the end has begun.³⁰⁴ We can find Plato's physics associated with the aforementioned reversals along with the dead raising only in this book. The composite is 100% Platonic. The *Politicus* myth is the ultimate archetype of all "end of time" stories.

The apocalypse of the *Politicus* came about because the fulfillment of time had come, and every soul had fulfilled all of its births the prescribed number of times. It had nothing to do with the actions of mankind, and was not a

³⁰² *Pol.* 271B-C (Fowler, LCL). This is the only example of bodily resurrection from the grave found in Plato's works.

³⁰³ *Pol.* 273A (Fowler, LCL).

³⁰⁴ Jesus apparently recognized this pattern of time reversal by observing what was happening: "And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is whoever is not offended in me" (Luke 7: 22-23; Matt 11:4-6). The concept of the reversal of time and the detailed consequences thereof is not found in traditional Jewish works. The hope for the blind seeing, deaf hearing and poor made happy is found in Isaiah 29:18-20; 35:5-6; 61:1, but without the dead raising.

punishment; it simply was time for God to balance the order in the Universe's material because "the stuff" of which it was formed was becoming unstable.³⁰⁵

In the Atlantis myth, however, the inhabitants, although originally begotten by Poseidon himself, had in subsequent generations deteriorated from true hearts, abundant virtue and noble action into hot tempered, warlike, ugly, lawless, ambitious people. God specifically destroyed Atlantis because their inhabitants had become evil.³⁰⁶ The Atlantis myth taught ethics and the punishment by God associated with the deterioration of morals; that is, divine retribution. The Atlantis myth, the myth in *Politicus*, and the summary of the flood myth in *Laws*, involve cycles of growth and destruction, wherein the earth and its peoples have been essentially destroyed many times before and will again be destroyed many times to come.³⁰⁷

The fact that Plato also considers the myth of cyclical destruction of the universe does not detract from his strongly repeated notion of eschatology of the soul as being reward for the virtuous and punishment for those who cannot attain virtue.

³⁰⁵ *Pol.* 272E, 273B-C. Cf. *Tim.* 49D-50A. See the aforementioned discussion in the Creation section on the intrinsic instability of the "stuff" used to form the material world.

³⁰⁶ *Critias* 120E-121C.

³⁰⁷ *Tim.* 22A; *Pol.* 269C-D, 270A-B; *Leg.* 676C-677B. Mention of periodic destruction of the world can also be found in the literary fragments of Anaximander, Anaximenes and Heraclites, of whose myths Plato seems to acknowledge.

CHAPTER 3

THE TRAJECTORY OF PLATONIC THEOLOGY

From Plato to Philo

The big question at this point is: How could Platonic thinking have influenced a Galilean Jew such as Jesus? It requires an imagination to be stretched beyond ordinary limits to consider that Jesus somehow was able to read all of the aforementioned Platonic excerpts, in their original Attic Greek, and decipher their complex meanings. Teachers from an Athenian philosophical school did not ordinarily traipse through a foreign country such as Galilee, in search of students. Jesus did not read Plato's works. Jesus learned about Plato's theology from another source. Whoever the teacher, or whatever the source, Jesus trusted this education enough to dedicate his remaining life to a mission to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

The proposed answer to the above question has already been stated: one or more persons fitting the description of a Jewish preacher/teacher/philosopher, likely from Alexandria, connected with Jesus, likely in a *synagōgē* in Galilee. The question thus becomes: How did it happen that Hellenized Alexandrian Jews traveled through Galilee preaching a new amalgam of Greek and Jewish philosophy that was considered to be consistent with that of both Plato and

Moses? As others have said: How does Athens influence Jerusalem?¹ The answer within this thesis, however, should not seem too strange. After all, Galilean *synagōgēs* welcomed lecturers and preachers that were friendly to the Jewish cause, including those who advocated a Hellenized Jewish approach of allegorized interpretation of Jewish Scripture, as did a long line of so-called Wisdom teachers. As the New Testament repeatedly says, Jesus with his Hellenized Kingdom of God gospel was welcome in all *synagōgēs* in Galilee; surely other Hellenized Wisdom teachers, perhaps from Alexandria, were welcome there also.

This chapter will explore aspects of Platonic thought that especially appealed to the philosophers of 1st century B.C. Alexandria. It has been asserted by John Dillon and others, that these Alexandrian, Middle Platonist, philosophers were heavily influenced by the Neo-Pythagorean revival that occurred at that time. The rise of Neo-Pythagoreanism in the 1st century B.C. coincided with an escalation of Jewish activism, as evidenced by Jewish literature that accommodated a “new” Greek philosophy. That is, the concepts of deity associated with Pythagorean and Platonic thought charged into Jewish literature at that time in a manner that was no longer subtle. This section attempts to examine the atmosphere that produced this result. In particular, it must be recognized that the Alexandrian merger of Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy did not abruptly begin with the first century B.C. Hellenistic Jews; it had started

¹ Tertullian, *Præscr.* 7.

centuries before, as Plato's thought became known to Jewish authors. This story starts with Plato and his followers.

The Followers of Plato

The major concepts within the works of Plato were accepted as doctrine by his followers, who inherited with his huge body of philosophical thought, a few problems the solutions of which would be argued for centuries. The applicable problematic areas have been discussed in the previous chapter. These problematic areas of particular interest in this thesis involve the aforementioned concepts of deity and reincarnation. Was Plato's deity a unity? Was Plato serious about reincarnation? John Dillon has perhaps overstated the situation involving these problems.

The Truth is, of course, that no later Platonist, starting from Speusippus and Xenocrates, could be strictly "orthodox," since Plato did not leave a body of doctrine which could simply be adopted, but, rather, a series of guiding ideas, replete with loose ends and even contradictions, which required interpretation. By the second century A.D., one in effect had the choice of adopting Aristotelian or Stoic terminology and concepts to give formal structure to one's interpretation of what Plato meant, and there was no central authority such as a Platonic Academy to make *ex cathedra* pronouncements on how far one could go. Nor, I think, was Platonism any the worse for that.²

Plato's discussion of his concept of deity was previously shown to have three elements: Forms or Ideas, Reason, and Soul. Plato, however, did not simply say that God was all three in One, or anything resembling a definition, if

² John M. Dillon, *The Great Tradition: Further Studies in the Development of Platonism and Early Christianity* (Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate Variorum, 1997), VI 119.

that is possible, of what today is termed as God. Accordingly, the use of the word "God" in the aforementioned chapter, although used by Plato, did not come to mean our present complex monotheistic notion of God during the several centuries of debate that occurred after Plato's time by his followers. That is, the discussion of a monotheistic God in the previous chapter is indeed valid and consistent with Plato's thought, but it is not the only possible interpretation.

Plato's three elements of the divine world are all part of the world of the intelligible, are all transcendent, and all exist. One problem occurs when Plato, in one place, has Socrates summarize Glaucon's dialog to say that the Idea of the Good is not essence, but *transcends* essence, at least in dignity and power.³ Glaucon is clearly in trouble here, in regard to the debate, for Socrates is forcing the issue, as is his style, in setting up his opponent by putting words into his mouth. The dialog hangs on the simile of the sun, which poses a problem in that it shines on existent, visible objects yet is well beyond their reach; that is, transcendent. If the sun is analogous to the Good, then the Good, too, must be beyond existence. The dialog ends in dramatic humor and without resolution, but the problematic statement has been made, and the wrongful conclusion follows: if the Idea of the Good is beyond existence and the Ideas and Reason are existent, then that would mean that the Idea of the Good must be a supreme deity. For those users of Platonic doctrine who could not afford the complete text of the *Republic*, but instead depended on highly abridged handbooks, the

³ *Resp.* 509B.

problem remained unresolved. In any event, for centuries, Platonists have been forced to defend this statement as *not* saying that the Idea of the Good is the Supreme Deity over and above the other Ideas, the Reason and the Soul. If Plato he had a unified notion of God, cannot equate to the absolute Idea of the Good.

Plato's notion of metempsychosis into animals was also fraught with problems, and was an ongoing dispute among Platonists. The Middle Platonists accepted the literal interpretation of Plato's notion of metempsychosis, until the Neoplatonists, from Porphyry on, declared it necessary to interpret the concept figuratively. One problem with metempsychosis is that the numbers of transmigrating souls quickly become ridiculous. For example, how many souls can be reincarnated into wasps and ants? There are more of these insects born each year than are all of the human souls ever born throughout humanity. The early Platonists argued that metempsychosis into animals is necessary to "fill up the quota for each species."⁴ It is factual, however, that most animals live very short lives, and insects even shorter, typically a few months. This means that the period of reincarnation into lower species can be very short. This, in turn, would mean that some living creatures possess reincarnated souls and others do not, and that all creatures have reasoning capability, else there would be no justice in metempsychosis.

This led to another problem, which is that Plato's notion of metempsychosis somehow had to be reconciled with the world of Forms, for the

⁴ John M. Dillon, *The Golden Chain* (Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate Variorum, 1990), XIV 136-7.

divine Form of the subject Horse or Ox or Wasp or Ant is the eternal model for the creature made in its image. This would mean that the whole notion of Forms would have to be modified to allow for the option of a reasonable mind within it, or not, or else the creature would be unnatural.⁵ Thus, the Form for an ant must allow for an option: with or without a reasoning mind or soul, for there are not enough reincarnated human souls to go around. Even with these problems, most Middle Platonists continued to interpret Plato in a literal fashion.⁶

The Old Academy

The century following Plato's death was an exciting one for the entire civilized world. Plato had founded the Academy in 387 B.C., and when he died in 347 B.C., at age eighty-one, he bequeathed it to his nephew Speusippus. When Speusippus died in 339 B.C., the headship of the Academy passed to Xenocrates, who held it until his death in 314 B.C. It then passed to Polemon, who was the head until his death in 267 B.C., and had as his pupil, Zeno of Citium, the founder of the Stoic philosophical movement and Stoa school.⁷ Zeno seems to have begun his Stoic school around 300 B.C.

After Plato's death in 347 B.C., his pupil and fellow teacher Aristotle left the Academy to spend five years in the court of Hermeias, one of his former

⁵ John M. Dillon, *Great Tradition*, X 346-47.

⁶ Dillon, *Great Tradition*, X 346, says that only Nemesis of Emesa rejected the concept of metempsychosis into animals.

⁷ John Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 40. Dillon is using Cicero's *Academica*, 1.35 and *De Finibus* 4.2, for the fact that Polemon taught Zeno.

pupils, before being appointed by King Phillip of Macedon to tutor his son, Alexander. In 336 B.C., Aristotle formed his own school at the Lyceum in Athens, that of the Peripatetics, and taught there until 323.

This era was exciting for philosophy in that the three major schools that addressed theology – the Platonists, the Stoics and the Peripatetics – were founded within a few decades of one another. Far more exciting was that this era was when Aristotle's pupil Alexander conquered the known civilized world, including all of the Levant. This conquest began in earnest the Hellenization of the new Greek world, in particular, the areas of Egypt, Palestine, and Syria.

The Golden Chain

The Neoplatonist Proclus, born around A.D. 410, is said to have used the term Golden Chain of Succession to describe the transmission of revealed truth from an ancient divine source, invariably traceable to Orpheus and/or Apollo, which included Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato, and their successors down to Proclus.⁸ Pythagoras and Plato, themselves, did not claim to be connected to Apollo and Orpheus, gods that were known to be mythical; but their followers made these claims for them. Pythagoras was associated not only with Orpheus, but Apollo as well.⁹ There were lists of the successions of philosophers prepared

⁸ Lucas Siorvanes, *Proclus: Neo-Platonic Philosophy and Science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 21.

⁹ John Dillon and Jackson Hershbell, trans. *Iamblichus: On the Pythagorean Way of Life: Text Translation, and Notes* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 35 (5). Iamblichus connects

from the second century B.C. onward; the most popular was by Sotion of Alexandria, whose list was organized by school and master.¹⁰ The most extensive doxographical summaries that exist today include one attributed to Aetius and one called the *Vetusa Placita*. The doxographical information of the philosophical chain included by Hippolytus in Book 1 of *The Refutation of All Heresies* likely used other sources than that of Aetius. Indeed, Diogenes Laertius mentions at least two separate books entitled *Successions of Philosophers*, those of Sosicrates and Alexander Polyhistor. Diogenes also uses books entitled *On Philosophical Sects* and *List of Philosophers* by Hippobotus, *History of the Philosophers* by Damon of Cyrene, and *On the Sages* by Hermippus.¹¹ Clearly, it was important for philosophers to be able to say who their masters and successors were.

It was common in these lists to show philosophy as having a twofold origin. First was the Ionian school starting with Thales, followed in turn by Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, and Archelaus, down to Socrates. From Socrates the succession in turn passes to Plato, Speusippus, Xenocrates, Polemon, Crantor, Crates, Arcesilaus (founder of the Middle Academy), Lacydes (founder of the New Academy), Carneades, and Clitomachus. Diogenes, however, relates that Alexander Polyhistor said that Socrates was a pupil of

Pythagoras to the Pythian Apollo of Delphi from whence comes his name (Chap. 2), and a member of his family chain *οἰκελότερον*.

¹⁰ Kirk, Raven & Schofield, *Presocratics*, 4. A philosopher's acme was assumed to be at the age of forty. A student was presumed to be forty years younger than his master.

¹¹ D.L., *Lives* 1.19, 40, 42; 2.19; 8.8, 24. Diogenes explains that few agree on all points, including the number and names of the Seven Sages: some include Pythagoras, some Orpheus.

Anaxagoras, and also of Damon the Pythagorean.¹² That is, Socrates was sometimes held to have a dual heritage, both Ionic and “Italian.”

This other, separate, line, termed the “Italian,” commenced with Pherecydes, followed in turn by Pythagoras, his son Telauges, Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno of Elea, Leucippus, Democritus, and finally Epicurus.¹³ Note that these two lines are depicted as separate schools. The notion that the lines are not combined or crossed in these lists of Diogenes implies a separation of traditions, perhaps due to a competition between the Pythagorean and Platonic schools. This separation of philosophical concepts was not the case in practice.

Plato the Pythagorean?

Photius (c. A.D. 821-891) preserved a treatise entitled *The Life of Pythagoras*, which states at the very beginning: “Plato was the pupil of Archytas, and thus the ninth in succession from Pythagoras; the tenth was Aristotle.”¹⁴ In this regard, the Neo-Pythagoreans considered the Golden Chain as originating from Orpheus through Pythagoras, to Plato and his followers, a crossing of the Ionic and “Italian” lists of succession. This also represents one-upmanship on the part of the Neo-Pythagoreans because it puts Pythagoras and Plato in a line of

¹² The best known Pythagorean whose name was Damon was from Syracuse in the time of Dionysius II, a contemporary of Plato who likely would have been far too young to have also been a teacher of Socrates. For the deaths of Pythagoreans Damon and his friend Phintias, both from Syracuse, see *Life* 27, 33, 36, in Dillon and Hershbell, 149, 231, 259.

¹³ D.L. *Lives*, 1.12-15. Strangely, Aristotle does not appear on either list, but is mentioned in an alternate post-Plato Ionic list in 1.15.

¹⁴ “The Life of Pythagoras: Preserved by Photius,” in Guthrie, *Sourcebook*, 137.

divine knowledge passed down from the semi-god Orpheus, something that the Ionic line stemming from Thales could not claim.

Clearly, Plato is greatly indebted to the concepts and teachings of Pythagoras and his school. For example, Aristotle says that Plato's theory of the Forms and other ontological notions such as the One come from the Pythagoreans, whom he sometimes calls the "Italians."¹⁵ Plato had plenty of exposure to Pythagorean philosophers, in particular, Archytas of Tarentum whom Plato befriended during his sojourn into Sicily to serve the tyrant Dionysius.¹⁶ Plato's early followers were well aware of his debt to the teachings of Pythagoras. As Walter Burkert says, "From Aristotle's time on, it had been customary to see Plato as a synthesis of Socrates and Pythagoras."¹⁷

Burkert complains that it is extremely difficult for a modern scholar to separate out the authentic teachings of Plato and Pythagoras due to the source problem associated with the fact that almost all that we know about Pythagoras comes from post-Plato authors.¹⁸ Indeed, there are extant excellent biographies of Pythagoras by Iamblichus of Chalcis, Porphyry of Tyre, and Diogenes Laertius, plus texts preserved by Photius, sentences attributed to Sextus,

¹⁵ *Metaph.* 987A, 987B, 988A.

¹⁶ *Ep.* 7.338C-D. Archytas is listed by Iamblichus as a Pythagorean, *Life* 36, in Dillon and Hershbelt, 257.

¹⁷ Walter Burkert, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism* (trans. Edwin L. Minar, Jr.; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), 94. Burkert cites *Metaph.* 987B and Cicero's *Fin.* 5.87; *Tusc.* 5.10; *Resp.* 1.10.

¹⁸ Burkert, *Lore*, 97-109. Burkert has chosen the criterion of examination of the mathematics, especially the number theory, as a discriminator between Pythagoras and Plato.

Hierocles, Philolaus, Archytas, Diotogenes, Theages, Hipparchus, Crito, Clinas, and many others.¹⁹ The ancients, such as Plato, had authentic books describing the Pythagorean philosophy, which were secret and very hard to come by. The problem is that post-Plato authors who were sympathetic to the Pythagorean philosophy – including but not restricted to the so-called Neo-Pythagoreans – seem to have attributed things to Pythagoras that were described by Plato; that is, they were trying to claim the original credit for the Pythagoreans and their school. Certainly, if Aristotle, who was in a position to know, is correct, then much of the credit for the Platonic notions of deity and soul is due to Pythagoras.

The later Neo-Platonists, however, who in many cases had already appropriated the philosophy of the earlier Neo-Pythagoreans, were not displeased with the treatment given by Plato of what they saw as the Pythagorean philosophy. Porphyry, for an example of a 3rd century perspective, saw it this way:

This primary philosophy of the Pythagoreans finally died out, first because it was enigmatical, and then because their commentaries were written in Doric [Greek], which dialect itself is somewhat obscure, so that Doric teachings were not fully understood, and they became misapprehended and finally suspect as spurious when later those who published them no longer were Pythagoreans. The Pythagoreans affirm that Plato, Aristotle, [and their followers] Speusippus, Aristoxenus and Xenocrates appropriated the best of them, making but minor changes, but later collected and delivered as characteristic Pythagorean doctrines whatever had been invented by envious and malicious persons, to cast contempt on Pythagoreans.²⁰

¹⁹ See Guthrie, *Sourcebook*, 11-14.

²⁰ Porphyry, *Vit. Pyth.* 53, in Guthrie, *Sourcebook*, 133-34. (Brackets original).

To Porphyry, this particular battle between competing schools was finally over. Plato and his early followers, those today called the “Old Academy,” had actually succeeded in reviving Pythagoreanism by means of appropriation and were considered to be reasonably faithful to the tenets of Pythagoras. The so-called “Middle Academy” that commenced with Arcesilaus and the “New Academy” of his successor Carneades had de-emphasized much of what Plato and Pythagoras had said in favor of skepticism, which questions whether the attainment of divine knowledge, or, for extreme Skeptics, any knowledge whatsoever, can be reached. Platonists from the Middle Academy on, until the later advent of what we call Middle Platonism, were divided on both if and how this emphasis on skepticism was true to the doctrines of Plato.

About three centuries after Plato, in the first century B.C., the Neo-Pythagoreans arose to re-invigorate what they saw as their original doctrines, and to claim that Plato, in fact, was one of the followers of Pythagoras. It is clear that in the time of the Middle Platonists, the Neo-Pythagoreans were critically important in the re-shaping of Platonism and its return to re-invigorate the Old Academy doctrines of Plato and his immediate followers. As important as Neo-Pythagoreanism was to Middle Platonism, it could not last long. In the time of Porphyry, three centuries after the Neo-Pythagorean movement had begun, the movement itself as a separate school had. The Neo-Platonists had effectively raided, overran, and squelched the philosophy of the Neo-Pythagoreans, absorbing their conquered followers into the Neo-Platonist way of thinking.

The Importance of the Neo-Pythagorean Movement

The Neo-Pythagorean movement significantly influenced the Middle Platonists in Alexandria, who in turn influenced Philo the Jew in a way that resulted in his emphasis on a particular motif that seem to have provided the approach taken by the Hellenized Jewish students that were taught in Alexandrian *synagōgē* schools. Philo's approach to his apologies for the Jews, using Greek philosophy, was greatly benefited by the legends concerning Pythagoras.

Another Jewish apologist, Josephus, said that not only Pythagoras, but also both his teacher Pherecydes of Syros and fellow sage Thales, the oldest of Greek philosophers to treat divine subjects, were, in fact, disciples of the Egyptians and Chaldeans. Pythagoras, said Josephus, had not only known of the institutions of the Jews, but was an ardent admirer of them, introducing many points of Jewish law into his philosophy and "imitating and appropriating the doctrines of Jews and Thracians."²¹ It is little wonder that, centuries later, Ambrose would consider Pythagoras to be Jewish.²²

²¹ Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.13-14; 1.162-165.

²² There is a little evidence to support Pythagoras as being either Jewish or at least an admirer and beneficiary of Jewish thought. For example, Pythagoras' strict vegetarianism may have been compatible with the dietary laws of Leviticus 11. But surely Josephus was not the first and only Jewish apologist to make this claim – a claim that usurps any Greek boast by truncating the top of the Golden Chain of philosophers. It would be far too inflaming for the ordinary Jewish apologist to claim that Pythagoras was essentially Jewish and that his followers, especially Plato, tried to continue but unintentionally corrupted the true philosophy stemming from Moses.

The Neo-Pythagorean revival became established in the first century B.C. It was preceded by a remarkable publication of a plethora of writings attributed directly to Pythagoras that was most likely pseudepigraphic. Holger Thesleff suggests that most of these writings were composed around the third century B.C. for use as textbooks for laymen.²³ Whoever composed them was careful to write them in the old Doric language – not a trivial task – apparently to give them authenticity, for Pythagoras would likely have used this Greek dialect. As Burkert relates: “The “forger” betrays himself by letting results, or concepts, or terminology of later philosophical thought creep in Another sign of forgery is too close an adherence to the wording of a passage of Plato or Aristotle; even when Plato is dependent on Pythagoreans, he does not copy word for word.”²⁴

Of particular concern is the story of the three books attributed to Philolaus, a somewhat younger Pythagorean contemporary of Socrates who was mentioned in the *Phaedo*. Philolaus had owned several books containing Pythagorean knowledge, which was considered to be secret, not to be divulged to anyone. According to both Iamblichus and Diogenes Laertius, Philolaus late in life fell into severe poverty and was forced to sell three such books to Plato, with

²³ Holger Thesleff, *The Pythagorean Texts of the Hellenistic Period* (Abo, Finland: Abo Akademi, 1965), for the Greek texts. See also Holger Thesleff, *An Introduction to the Pythagorean Writings of the Hellenistic Period* (Abo, Finland: Abo Akademi, 1961), 40, 57, 69, 92, 99, wherein Thesleff presents an excellent argument that the Neo-Pythagorean writings known to Philo, which contained in many fragments and partial lists of sentences, were derived ultimately from Archytas, the Sicilian Pythagorean teacher of Plato, and were collected, not written, by Alexandrian scholars in the first century B.C. (92).

²⁴ Burkert, *Lore*, 222.

the transaction aided by Dion of Syracuse, a mutual friend.²⁵ Burkert has determined that the fragments of Philolaus represent the first appearance of Pythagorean writings and are essentially authentic: "We are inclined to see in Philolaus nothing but the transmitter of older Pythagorean teachings, and in fact all indications are that the Pythagoreans themselves saw nothing more in his book than an expression of the wisdom of Pythagoras."²⁶ That is, these writings may very well have been forgeries, but the content of some of them was consistent with the original teachings of Pythagoras.

Charles H. Kahn describes a scenario that could explain the motivation for the forgeries. At the transition of the Roman Republic to the Roman Empire, Romans needed to show themselves as having world-class philosophers as did the Greeks, and naturally they enthusiastically admired Pythagoras and his "Italian" Pythagoreans of Sicily, claiming them as their own. Pliny relates that an official statue of Pythagoras had been erected in Rome at the beginning of the third century B.C. Further, says Kahn, Roman writers were using Pythagorean concepts in their work. For example, the Latin poet Ennius had introduced Pythagorean reincarnation into his epic poem, the *Annales*, and Cicero had used Plato's *Myth of Er* into his *Dream of Scipio*, among other examples.²⁷ Kahn speculates that, in the first century B.C., Pythagoreanism had been in vogue in

²⁵ Iamblichus, *Life* 31, in Dillon and Hershbell, 203. D.L., *Lives*, 3.9; 8:15. See Burkert, *Lore*, 218-98 for an extensive analysis of this issue.

²⁶ Burkert, *Lore*, 239.

²⁷ Charles H. Kahn, *Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans: A Brief History* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2001), 86-88.

Rome for hundreds of years due to nationalistic concerns and admiration for the "Italian" philosophers.²⁸ In Rome, Pythagoreans were likely admired more because of national pride rather than for theological reasons, although the Pythagorean Nigidius Figulus in his proem to his translation of the *Timaeus*, indicates that "there were surely other avowed Pythagoreans in the circle around Nigidius, and presumably some form of ritual initiation."²⁹

In the first century B.C., Neo-Pythagoreanism was very popular in Alexandria. Although the Neo-Pythagoreans were quite active in Rome, Alexandria seems to have been the center of philosophical activity in regard to development of the theology associated with the Middle Platonists. Alexandrian philosophers, in particular the Jewish philosopher Philo, had strong affinity with the Neo-Pythagoreans. The reasons for this can be attributed to several factors, one of which would seem to be based on the story that Pythagoras studied in Egypt during the Jewish exile and had himself been exiled to Babylon. Pythagoras was said to have visited Mt. Carmel in Palestine prior to arriving in Egypt, where he had spent twenty-two years. Pythagoras' experiences in Egypt were later related by Porphyry and Iamblichus, but surely were known well before their time. Iamblichus relates Pythagoras' experience as follows:

From there he visited every holy place, full of great zeal, and with a desire for careful inspection. He was both admired and cherished by the priests and prophets with whom he associated. He learned everything most attentively, and neglected neither any oral

²⁸ Kahn, *Pythagoras*, 88.

²⁹ Kahn, *Pythagoras*, 90.

instruction commended in his own time, nor anyone known for sagacity, nor any rite anywhere and at anytime honored. He also left no place unvisited where he thought he would find something exceptional. Hence he visited all the priests, and benefited from the special wisdom of each. So he spent twenty-two years in the sanctuaries of Egypt, studying astronomy and geometry and being initiated into all the mystic rites of the gods, not superficially nor haphazardly, until, taken prisoner by Cambyses' soldiers, he was brought to Babylon ... spending twelve years there.³⁰

Iamblichus' account would put Pythagoras in Egypt during the time of the Persian king Cambyses' conquest in 531 B.C. Cambyses, who had succeeded Cyrus the Great, ruled Egypt for eight years before dying suddenly on his way home in 522 B.C.³¹ At that time, the Jews' return from the exile, which had begun in 537 or so, would have been well underway. This would be the time of Zerubbabel and Joshua, the commencement of the rebuilding of the temple, and the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and the author of Isaiah 56-66. It does not seem possible, given the locales of both the Egyptian diaspora and a post-exile Babylon, that a visitor as curious as Pythagoras would *not* have had an overwhelming exposure to Jewish philosophers and priests.

³⁰ Iamblichus, *Life* 4, in Dillon and Hershbell, 45. The authors state that the date for his arrival in Egypt is said by Aristoxenus to be 532/1 B.C., and that is a problem because another source has his arrival in Babylon as 525 B.C. See also Guthrie, *Sourcebook*, 125, for Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras* 12, describing Pythagoras' experiences in Egypt and Babylon. Cf. D.L., *Lives*, 7.2-3.

³¹ Lawrence Boadt, *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 431.

The Neo-Pythagorean Influence on Alexandrian Platonists

The first Hellenistic philosopher known to have expounded a version of Platonic philosophy that is explicitly attributed to the Pythagoreans is Eudorus of Alexandria, in the second half of the first century B.C.³² No complete writing has been preserved from Eudorus, but it has been cited by many, such as Plutarch, Arius Didymus, Achilles, and Simplicius. From these excerpts, it is obvious that Eudorus was going against the skepticism of the New Academy and returning to some of the earlier doctrines of the Old Academy.³³ His specific theological shift was to reconsider the notion of one Supreme God, fully transcendental, principle of all things, the highest account (*Logos*), from which matter and all other beings have come into existence.³⁴ This is a development from the earlier Old Pythagoreans, who had not postulated a single supreme principle, but a pair, the Limit and the Unlimited.³⁵ One of the problems of Plato's legacy to his followers was that he never adequately explained the notion of a Supreme God. Plato had said a lot about the intelligible world of the Forms, the Mind (*Nous*), and the World Soul, but other than what may be understood from an anthropological analogy to intellect, it was difficult to integrate Plato's concept of divinity into the more modern term *God*. This doctrine of Eudorus, says Dillon, contradicts both

³² Kahn, *Pythagoras*, 95.

³³ Kahn, *Pythagoras*, 97.

³⁴ Simplicius, *In Phys.*, 181.10-30. See Kahn, *Pythagoras*, 98.

³⁵ Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 127.

Old Pythagoreanism and strict Platonism, but gave absolute power to the one God, which fit in very well with what Philo would accomplish decades later.³⁶ Eudorus also confirmed what Xenocrates and Crantor had said about the immortality of the soul and its creation; that is, this part of creation happened *before* the beginning of time.³⁷ Eudorus's approach may not have immediately dominated Alexandrian Middle Platonism, however, because half a century later, there are witnesses to a heated argument between the proponents of skepticism, who said that divine knowledge is unattainable by humans, and the dogmatic followers of Platonic doctrine, who said, as did Plato, that it was.

The aforementioned confrontation came to a head in a famous argument that took place in Alexandria led by Antiochus of Ascalon, known primarily for (1) being a member of the Academy under Philo of Larisa, and (2) being Cicero's teacher for six months in the winter of 79-78 B.C., as the sole lecturer and *de facto* head of the Academy in Athens.³⁸ It should not escape our attention that Antiochus' hometown was Ascalon, a town in Palestine, which he would have left in the latter half of the period of the Hasmonean rule. However, little can be made of his years there, except to say that perhaps the environment of this Palestinian city somehow encouraged the study of Platonic philosophy.

³⁶ Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 128. Here Dillon is relying on Simplicius, *In Phys.* 181.10-11.

³⁷ Dillon, *Middle Platonism*, 132. The notion that God created anything before the beginning of time gives a new understanding of the meaning of eternal. That is, God's eternal Ideas were God's thoughts before the beginning of time, and the creative *Logos* represents God's thoughts thereafter.

³⁸ Cicero, *Fin.* 5.1, 6, "He attracts me immensely; but Antiochus calls me in the other direction; and there is no other lecturer to go to" (Rackham, LCL).

Antiochus had relocated to Athens, where Philo of Larisa was continuing the skepticism theme that was associated with the New Academy. Fed up with skepticism, Antiochus instigated a major break with Philo of Larisa, and went back to teaching the doctrines of the Old Academy. John Dillon considers that Antiochus' personal philosophy was shifted away from the skepticism of the New Academy that was essentially followed by Cicero.³⁹ Antiochus' philosophy seems likely to have been based on the theology of the divine, and how to reach it; that is, Old Academy Platonism.

Antiochus had departed from Athens to Rome in 88 B.C., and had lectured there with Cicero and many others in attendance. However, Antiochus left Rome in 87 B.C. for Alexandria. In Alexandria Antiochus explained his break with his master, Philo of Larisa, to his Platonist friend Heraclitus of Tyre. Heraclitus and "quite a number of other learned men, among them Antiochus's brother Aristus," had "spent a great deal of time in this single discussion."⁴⁰ Antiochus then returned to Rome to head up the remnant of the Academy. About ten years later, a student of Antiochus and friend of Cicero said: "Our master Antiochus seems to me to adhere most scrupulously to the doctrine of the ancients, which according to his teaching was common to Aristotle and to Polemon."⁴¹ The doctrines and concepts of Plato were thus reinvigorated. It was again thought possible to obtain

³⁹ Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 60-61.

⁴⁰ *Acad. Pr.* 2.12 (Rackham, LCL). Antiochus later wrote a book, entitled the *Sôsus*, about this famous argument that documented Antiochus' dialog against the skepticism advocated by Philo of Larisa, to which Cicero may have had access.

⁴¹ Cicero, *Fin.* 5.14 (Rackham, LCL).

divine knowledge, even to know God, through love of wisdom and practice of virtue.

The important point is that although Antiochus was not a regular teacher in the Alexandrian Platonic school, this incident shows the major shift going on at that time. Put another way, the theology inherent within the later apologies of the Jewish Philo of Alexandria could not have used skepticism, and were it not for the aforementioned shift, what may have ended up as Hellenistic Judaism would have had little or no affinity with the theology of Plato.

Dillon has conjectured a philosophy of Antiochus that has been gleaned from Cicero's works, since nothing written by Antiochus himself has survived. This is a difficult endeavor, because Cicero's works are tainted not just with the aforementioned skepticism, but Stoicism as well. Nevertheless, a few points are clear. First is that Plato's Demiurge function of the *Logos* now, finally, becomes the *Logos* or Reason of God. Furthermore, the World Soul is equated with the *Logos*, to be understood as the "one positive force immanent in the world."⁴² However, consistent with Stoic thought, there is no place whatsoever for any notion of the "immaterial, transcendent or external to the material universe." In this regard, Antiochus has substituted a Stoic principle for a skeptical one.⁴³ As Dillon says about this:

⁴² Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 83.

⁴³ Cicero, *Fin.*, xxviii (Rackman, LCL), "He (Antiochus) asserted that the teachings of the older Academics and Peripatetics and of the Stoics were, in Ethics at all events, substantially the same, and that Zeno had borrowed his tenets from his predecessors, merely concealing the theft by his novel terminology."

Since transcendence and immateriality were unquestioned doctrines of Middle Platonists at a later stage, however, it is plain from this that Antiochus cannot be regarded as the sole father of the movement.⁴⁴

Antiochus did figure out a suitable answer as to what to do about the Ideas of Plato; they became "the thoughts of God." The sum total of the Ideas became the content, the *logoi spermatikoi*, of the *Logos*.⁴⁵ This may seem obvious to someone not familiar with the terms involved and the history of the problem; that is, divine Ideas are eternal thoughts of God. However, because Plato did not say it that way, it was a long road to arrive at that conclusion, and Antiochus' simplification of this particular concept was very useful.⁴⁶ He is thus responsible, at least in part, for unifying the notions of Ideas, Reason, World Soul, and demiurge into the *Logos* concept, an integration that will well serve Philo of Alexandria and, later, the Christian Fathers.

The Remarkable Philo of Alexandria

Philo's theology is a product of Middle Platonic, Neo-Pythagorean, Stoic, and traditional Jewish philosophy. As Dillon says: "Philo of Alexandria is one of

⁴⁴ Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 83-84.

⁴⁵ Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 95.

⁴⁶ To Plato, Ideas were the look or appearance of a thing, a model. The alternate term *Form* is better suited in this regard. The Middle Platonists concluded that the Ideas had to have come from the action of God's Reason.

the most remarkable literary phenomena of the Hellenistic world."⁴⁷ Strictly speaking, Philo cannot be called a Platonist because there is no record that he either conducted a Platonic school or defended Platonism as a disciple of Plato's philosophy. It was not Philo's objective to preserve Platonism, or even to modify and clarify it for use by later Platonists.⁴⁸ Philo's objective was to *use* Platonism, even if it had to be modified and stretched to fit his personal Jewish understanding, for the purpose of demonstrating that Jewish theology was every bit as good, often better, certainly older, and more authentic than the best that Plato and all the Greeks had come up with. As Philo bent Platonism toward Judaism, he also bent Judaism toward Platonism. As Samuel Sandmel says:

The journey along the royal road from the world of perception to the world of concepts is the journey to salvation, namely, the rising out of corporeality, rising out of this world, and attaining to communion with God in the form of the Logos, and then to the deathlessness represented by the term immortality. The Laws make this possible for all men. Philo, accordingly, transmutes Judaism into a religion of salvation and communion with God. Philo both explains how all this works, and shapes his tractates so as to persuade his readers to put it all into practice.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 139.

⁴⁸ David T. Runia, "Was Philo a Middle Platonist? A Difficult Question Revisited," in *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, *SPhA* 5 (1993):112-40, concludes that Philo was not a Platonist. Gregory Sterling, in "Platonizing Moses: Philo and Middle Platonism," *SPhA* 5 (1993): 111, however, finds Philo to fit his definition of a Middle Platonist.

Philo was careful to define his philosophy as the "practice or study of wisdom, and wisdom is the knowledge of things divine and human and their causes" (*Congr.* 79[Colson & Whitaker, LCL]). Philosophy is "to see your own soul and the mind of which you think so proudly" (*Somn.* 1.56 [Colson & Whitaker, LCL]), or to "know thyself" (*Somn.* 1.58). See also *Somn.* 1.205; *Congr.* 144.

⁴⁹ Sandmel, *Judaism*, 296. See also *Post.* 101-02. See also Hadas, *Hellenistic Culture*, 76, "Philo's adaptations may force the meaning of Plato unduly (but not really so much as he forces

David Runia has pondered the question of why Clement of Alexandria, over two centuries later, called Philo "The Pythagorean."⁵⁰ Runia notes that Philo clearly has an affinity with Pythagoreanism in four ways. The first is that Philo uses number theory and symbolism. Next is his use of the Pythagorean theme "Following God." The third is that Philo extensively uses the pseudo-*Timaeus*, which in Clement's day was considered Pythagorean because the text, now known as pseudepigraphic, of that title by an author calling himself Timaeus of Locri, a Pythagorean, was considered valid. The fourth is that in Clement's time, Pythagoreans and Platonists were conflated and the terms used were almost considered to be interchangeable.

Philo had gone through the full Greek basic education, but may have been self taught in regard to Platonism. As Dillon says:

Above all, however, he is steeped in Plato. His particular favorites are the *Timaeus* and the *Phaedrus*, though he employs also the *Phaedo*, and key portions of the *Theaetetus*, *Symposium*, *Republic* and *Laws*. Of course, this selection and order of preference is in no way peculiar to Philo, and merely shows him to be fully in tune with the preferences of contemporary Platonism, but he does not, on the other hand, seem to be dependent on handbooks, as one often suspects to be the case with, for instance, the Church Fathers.⁵¹

Philo did not wholly base his theology on that of Plato, but leaned heavily on the prior work of Eudorus, and to a much lesser extent, that of Antiochus. As Robert Berchman relates:

the meaning of Scripture) yet he never takes open issue with Plato, as he does with the Stoics, and is plainly unaware that he may be doing violence to Plato."

⁵⁰ David Runia, "Why does Clement Call Philo 'The Pythagorean?'" in *Philo and the Church Fathers: A Collection of Papers* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 54-76.

⁵¹ Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 140.

However, Philo did not merely take over Eudorus' doctrines. He critically evaluated them, taking that which was useful and discarding that which was not. He culled his theological definitions from Eudorus' philosophical theology and affirmed the radical transcendence of the biblical God. However, he rejected the ontological dualism of Eudorus' theoretic. It was here that his own reflections on the *Timaeus* and the physics of Antiochus aided him in affirming God's relation to the universe.⁵²

Much has been written about whether Philo was a Jewish Platonist or a Platonic Jew, but the answer doesn't matter. Philo wove Platonism and Judaism together as tight as any warp met the woof, with Platonic philosophy explaining the Pentateuch and the Pentateuch expanding and clarifying Platonic thought. With Philo, the two realms cannot be separated.

The Theology of Philo of Alexandria

Perhaps the most striking thing about virtually any of Philo's many exegetical books is that the reading is like looking into a prism.⁵³ Generally, Philo quotes a verse of Scripture, and then follows it by an elaborate allegorical interpretation. A typical Old Testament scholar might look at the Scripture exegesis and discount the mystical allegories as fluff, the product of a fertile imagination, or even fantasy. However, after a fresh reading of Plato's theology, as was discussed in the previous chapter, the reading of Philo takes on an entirely new meaning. The mystical elaboration can be seen to be Platonic

⁵² Robert M. Berchman, *From Philo to Origen: Middle Platonism in Transition* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984), 27.

⁵³ The discussion here pertains to the nineteen so-called allegorical commentaries. The structure of the collection of the books called the Exposition of the Laws is different.

theology as modified in a very few areas by Middle Platonism. So now, the reader can look for Platonisms, which are legion, and notice how Philo has used verses of Scripture, viewed allegorically, to justify the Platonic theology. Accordingly, a traditional Jew would find exegesis of Scripture, but with philosophical fluff. A Greek would find Platonic theology, with allegorized Scripture as proof-text. The end result of this "deliberate ambiguity" is that a Jewish preacher or teacher, armed with Philo's methodical approach, had the means to disarm any Greek claiming the superiority of Greek philosophy.⁵⁴ The overwhelming message preached by Philo and preachable by his pupils is that Moses had said it all first and had said it with fewer words than did Plato.

Gregory Sterling has concluded that the proper way to view this mix of Platonism and Torah is to realize that Philo considered the secrets of Platonic thought as being locked up in the Torah, with the key to their unlocking being allegorical exegesis.⁵⁵ It seems that Philo, after 150 years of verbal war between Jews and Greeks, had arrived at an attitude of, to use a common expression, "if you can't lick 'em, then join 'em." That is, he realized that it would be futile to expect the Greeks to recognize the superiority of Jewish Scripture and so instead chose to demonstrate that Scripture *exemplified* Greek philosophy. In Philo's way of battle, if his approach is accepted, then both sides win.

⁵⁴ David Winston, *Logos and Mystical Theology in Philo of Alexandria* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1985), 14. "Moreover, I am equally convinced that his mode of exposition is characterized by a deliberate ambiguity, which allowed him to cover his tracks when the philosophical views he had adopted would have struck the wider Jewish audience he was addressing as essentially alien to their native way of thinking."

⁵⁵ Sterling, "Platonizing Moses," 100.

The reader might, for example, view *The Migration of Abraham* as an exegesis on *Genesis* 7:1-4, 6, which relates the Old Testament story of God's promise to Abraham that commanded him to depart from his father's land, to arrive first at Haran, then Sechem. Ordinarily, these passages are not considered to be the most exciting within the Old Testament. In the work of Philo, however, this story is not particularly about Abraham's travels. What the story is really about is the return journey of the soul released from the prison-house of the body by the search for divine wisdom. It is about the path to immortality by means of the love of learning and the education of the mind; e.g., philosophy. As David Winston notes: "The central thrust and fundamental aim of Philo's biblical commentary is to trace the return of the human soul to its native homeland by means of the allegorical method of interpretation, 'the method dear to men with their eyes opened.'"⁵⁶

The Preliminary Studies, on the surface, is an exegesis of *Genesis* 26:1-6, concerning Abram's wife Sarah and her handmaiden Hagar, whom Abram impregnated. This is a Scripture passage having "little of the eloquence and spirituality which brighten most of the others."⁵⁷ Philo's exegesis, however, is about the education and growth of the soul through philosophy. Here, God is the provider of nourishment and the savior of the soul. In addition, the soul is the

⁵⁶ Winston, *Logos*, 36-37. "The gradual removal of the psyche from the sensible realm and its ascent to a life of perfection in God is symbolically portrayed for Philo by the scriptural account of Abraham's migration."

⁵⁷ *Congr.* (Colson & Whitaker, LCL), 4:451.

legitimate spouse, the life-mate, of divine Reason, the *Logos*. Philo has spiced up the Scripture passage to show compatibility with a very important Platonic concept: the growth of the human soul.

In similar vein, *On Dreams*, which might seem to an Old Testament scholar to discuss the short passage of Jacob's dream in Genesis 28:10-22, is in actuality a lengthy discussion of the stairway to heaven. That is, with Philo, this passage represents the entire story of salvation of the immortal soul by means of purifying the soul, seeking and finding divine knowledge through true philosophy, and growing it via the divine *Logos* – who is a King, a teacher, a friend, and a counselor – until the enlightened person can see angels. Finally, after death of the body, the soul can gaze on God. Jacob's ladder is a stairway to heaven that is a much more pious version of that stairway of Diotima's described by Socrates in the *Symposium*.

Perhaps even more pertinent is Philo's *On the Change of Names*, which would seem to address Genesis 17:1-5, 15-22. What it is really about, however, is the ladder to heaven, in particular the rung next to the top, where Jacob sees God. Philo notes that both Abraham and Jacob underwent a name change when they saw, with "the eye of the soul" (4), God as sovereign King (16-17): "The king has been manifested, king indeed from the first, but hitherto unrecognized by the soul, which so long unschooled has not remained in ignorance for ever but has received the vision of the Sovereignty which rules over all that is." This is a remarkable passage that describes the process of the human soul, through the

practice of virtue and the seeking of wisdom, to see the invisible King over all: the Kingdom of God.⁵⁸ It will be shown in Chapter 5 that Jesus' notion of the Kingdom of God is compatible with that of Philo's.

Philo's theology represented a development from the Platonism of the Old Academy, through Stoicism and Middle Platonism, to a system compatible with Judaism. This development was hardly a sudden metamorphism. Plato's divine, intelligible world was an integrated concept that considered the absolute and fully transcendent Ideas together with the divine Mind (*Nous*) that had functions that were both transcendent and immanent. The immanent function of *Nous* was associated with its Reason, where *Nous* can be considered, and translated, as either Mind or Reason. Plato also had a World Soul that penetrates everything. The three aspects of divinity together – Ideas, Mind, and World Soul – were, to Philo, identical to the Jewish notion of the one God.⁵⁹

The Stoics, from Zeno, the student of the Old Academy head Polemon, on, seem to have greatly simplified Plato's notion of deity. They considered that since Plato's notion of a transcendent deity could have nothing whatsoever to do with the world, so then why not just get rid of it, for it is meaningless to the practical world if it is indeed fully transcendent. So Plato's notions of Ideas and a

⁵⁸ *Mut.* 16-17 (Colson & Whitaker, LCL). Philo's Kingdom of God can be seen only after late learning (*ὁψιμαθής*). Jacob, in particular, in a contest of wisdom and with gymnastics of his soul, wrestled with his passions through the practice of virtue, until finally his soul won the prize of victory that enabled him to behold God with clear vision (81-82). See also *Migr.* 200-01; *Ebr.* 82. This oft-repeated theme of Philo is the epitome of the Platonic challenge of salvation: the wrestling of the passions via schooling until the sight of God is attained.

⁵⁹ Philo considered the absolute Ideas, or Models, to be thoughts of God engraved in the soul as in wax (*Opif.* 17-19).

transcendent mind, although recognized as Platonic terms of transcendence, were essentially ignored and unused within the Stoics' philosophical discussions. The notion of immanent Reason, however, became significantly expanded by Stoic thinking. As it was explicitly said in Plato's *Timaeus*, the creation occurred as *Nous* spoke; therefore, the immanent function of deity was the active Reason, which the Stoics now called the *Logos*.⁶⁰ Further, because the *Logos* was omnipresent, as was the World Soul, the Stoics simply equated and combined the terms, leaving the *Logos* as the single active, immanent, principle in the world. Again from *Timaeus*, the active Reason had created and formed matter, which became the passive element of the world; thus, the *Logos* was the creative force of the universe. Accordingly, the Stoics were left with only two terms to consider as comprising their entire concept of deity: *Logos* and matter. *Logos* was everywhere, within each and every piece of matter. The Stoics, then, were by definition, pantheistic. Their God was the omnipresent *Logos*. They had no other God, no transcendent deity out in the heavens, no transcendent anything.

Ronald Williamson has summarized Philo's use of the term *Logos*.

Philo was able to use the *Logos* concept – and did not have to invent it in order to retain both his belief in God's transcendence and his conviction that God was in touch with his world – because it was present in the thought, for example, of the Stoics. ... For Philo the Stoic concept needed, of course, to be detached from the pantheism of Stoicism and united with the Jewish conception of divine transcendence. Philo was probably, as has been suggested, looking round for an appropriate term for the divine Mind. The more

⁶⁰ *Tim.* 41D. The Stoics could not continue with the Platonic term *Nous* because of its transcendent connotation. The term *Logos*, which denotes an action of speaking, was selected as a more appropriate term

obvious term, *nous*, was already in use, within Stoicism and elsewhere, for the human mind, so, carrying with it some of its Stoic association of meaning, but also given new contents, the term *Logos* came to be used by Philo for the divine Mind. Philo was probably encouraged to use the term and to use it in the way he did by the preparation for its employment in what the Old Testament said about 'the Word of God'.⁶¹

The term *Logos*, to the Stoics, was their term for God. The theology involved in their notion of a fully immanent God was essentially incompatible with Jewish theology. Traditional Jewish thought demanded a transcendent, intelligible, God who resided in heaven; the pantheism of the Stoics was a blasphemy. The term *Logos*, however, could be interpreted as the creative Word of the Jews' transcendent God. That is, *Logos* might mean one thing to the Stoics, but a quite different thing to the Jews. Philo seems to have nicely worked with this ambiguity, perhaps exploited it. That is, the immanent *Logos* of the Stoics became, for Philo, the transcendent *Logos* of the God of the Jews, using the Platonic understanding that when the fully transcendent God thinks, then things happen in the sensual world. Philo's theology apparently made good sense to the Hellenized Jews, and a little later, to the author of the *Gospel of John*.⁶²

⁶¹ Ronald Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World: Philo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 104.

⁶² Philo's work may have influenced the New Testament book of Hebrews, which scholars have long known to reflect Platonism and address many of the same topics as did Philo. See Ronald Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 1-10.

Philo's Logos as Deity

Philo simplified deity down to God and God's Mind, or *Logos*. His logic seems to go as follows: The Mind of God does not constitute all of God. However, God includes the Mind of God. God can be transcendent, but the Mind of God can be immanent. That is, God can be transcendent, way out there, out of the universe. But if God thinks about anything that is within the universe, then things happen, for the Mind of God is God's power in the universe.⁶³ The transcendent God cannot physically visit us here, but God's thoughts can, and do. It was by these divine thoughts that creation happened, and by which, since creation, souls and seeds of knowledge have been emanated into the universe.

Philo's theological concept of God, above all else, had to be one, unified, deity:

Now we must first lay down that no existing thing is of equal honor to God and that there is only one sovereign and ruler and king, who alone may direct and dispose of all things.⁶⁴

Philo's notion of deity, like that of Plato, was that the divine made up the entire, invisible intelligible world, as separate from the visible, material world.

Although Philo said that God was unchangeable, omnipresent, indefinable,

⁶³ Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 112-13. The *Logos* is the power, the ruler, the steersman, the shepherd, the instrument through which the divine purpose is carried out. The *Logos* is also the image of God (*Fug.* 101) and the son of God and Wisdom (*Fug.* 109).

⁶⁴ *Conf.* 170 (Colson & Whitaker, LCL), where Philo also quotes the *Iliad* 2.204-05, "Be there but one, one king." See *Opif.* 16-23 about how God first created the pattern and models discernable only by the mind, followed by the fashioning of the material world. See also Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 42.

unknowable and indescribable, he did not insist on Plato's doctrine that God's Ideas were absolute, or that the Ideas represented something beyond existence. Philo seems to be original in figuring out that the Ideas were unchangeable and eternal because they were created by the *Logos* simultaneously, before time was created. But unlike Plato, for Philo the Ideas were the action of the *Logos* – that is, the early thoughts of God – and could be safely thought of as being the timeless function of the *Logos* itself. Plato's Ideas, as separate entities, thus were absorbed into his concept of *Logos* and the problem of how to fit them into the overall concept of deity thus disappeared.⁶⁵ Part of Philo's brilliance was his realization that God's creation that was described first in Genesis was that of the divine, intelligible universe. Furthermore, the second creation described was that of the material world, beginning with the visible heaven, and with it, time itself. This realization alone loaned tremendous credibility to the philosophy or theology of the Jews, because by using Scriptures, the creation doctrine of Plato finally became understandable.⁶⁶ That is, the unchanging, absolute, static aspect of deity, which includes the *Logos*, was created by God before time began, hence

⁶⁵ *Somn.* 1.186; *Conf.* 172. See Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 111, "Philo here seems to imply that the world of Ideas is within the *Logos* rather than being identical and coterminous with it." "But because the Ideas are Ideas, the infinite variety of ideal archetypes of the actual world, existing within the divine *Logos* or Mind, the *Logos* or Mind of God, Philo often refers to their creation by God," *Opif.* 16-23.

⁶⁶ Winston, *Logos*, 23-5, notes that Philo's double creation is difficult for scholars to unravel because of Philo's having the primordial Forms and the intelligible universe created on the first day (*Opif.* 16, 29), and the ordering of the heavens with the implied notion of time on the fourth day (*Opif.* 35, 45, 53), but the creation of man on the sixth day (*Opif.* 66-68). As Winston notes, Philo says that the notion of days is not to be interpreted as involving the modern notion of time, but, as Philo clearly says in several places, all six days of creation occurred *simultaneously* (*Opif.* 13, 26, 56-7, 60). That is, creation occurred outside of time, or before time started.

was, is, and forever shall be, and is diatonic over all time, or eternal.⁶⁷ After the beginning of time, via the *Logos*, things changed. Dillon says it in round about:

This intelligible world is viewed as none other than the *Logos*, viewed statically (cf. *Opif.* 20), while viewed dynamically, the *Logos* is the sum-total of the spermatic reason-principles which permeate the physical world and give it form. This system is thoroughly Stoic, except for the important fact that God Himself is immaterial and transcendent. That makes it Platonist, and it is such a Platonized *Logos* that St. John adopts in his Gospel.⁶⁸

Philo's *Logos* incorporated Plato's Ideas and essentially everything Plato had said about the *Nous*, the Mind of God. Philo, like the Stoics, also absorbed Plato's World Soul into the *Logos*. What remained, accordingly, from Plato's theological system of deity were the terms of God and his Mind, the *Logos*. As a result, Philo ended up with a simplified, unified and uncompounded concept of God that was quite compatible with the traditional Jewish concept, but described instead in Greek philosophical terms.⁶⁹

Much ink has been spilled in comparing the *Logos* of Philo with that of the *Gospel of John*. Augustine thought that the entire prologue of John could be found in the works of Plato, except for the incarnation of Jesus as the *Logos*.⁷⁰ Generally speaking, that fact noted by Augustine is the bed-rock upon which the

⁶⁷ The *Logos*, then, is both created and eternal. The creative Word of God in *Genesis* is thus not temporal but eternal. Pace Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, (trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray, et al.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 21, it is incorrect to say that "God's Word is not the essence of something that has timeless significance, but is address, which takes place; it is a temporal event, and as such the revelation of God as Creator and Lord."

⁶⁸ Dillon, *Great Tradition*, VIII 3.

⁶⁹ Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 48-49.

⁷⁰ Augustine, *Confessions* 7.9, in reference to John 1:1-12.

commentators of John who even mention Hellenistic Judaism agree. C. H. Dodd takes the stance that the *Logos* of John must surely be the *Logos* of Philo:

While therefore statements of the Prologue *might* be understood all through on the assumption that *Logos* is the Word of the Lord in the Old Testament sense, yet it seems certain that any reader influenced by the thought of Hellenistic Judaism, directly or at a remove, would inevitably find suggested here a conception of the creative and revealing *Logos* in many respects similar to that of Philo; and it is difficult not to think that the author intended this. His *Logos* is not simply the uttered word or command of God; it is the meaning, plan or purpose of the universe, conceived as transcendent as well as immanent, as the thought of God, formed within the eternal Mind and projected into objectivity.⁷¹

Even so, one of the most fascinating aspects of Philo's theology is that he came very close to saying that Moses was the *Logos* incarnate! Philo describes Moses as divinely inspired, filled with God, and being an unmixed part of God who is both resolved into the unity of God and changed into the divine.⁷²

Williamson explains this astounding concept.

The question that has been raised of the possibility of an incarnation of the *Logos* within the human life-history of Moses raises also the question of whether or not the *Logos* of Philo was personal. Philo certainly speaks of the *Logos* in personal terms, as, for example, the Son of God (*Conf.* 146). The same implication seems to lie behind such titles as a 'high-priest' in *Somn.* 1.215, but it is doubtful if personification proceeds to the point of personalization. The *Logos* of Philo is never, as it was later in Christian theology, a 'person' within the one Godhead. There may well have been, in Philo's mind, some kind of incarnation of the divine *Logos* within the life-history of the human Moses – thus making Moses a divine-human being – but there is nothing in that Philonic conception that is precisely the same as the Christian concept of the Incarnation within a particular human life (that of

⁷¹ C. H. Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 277.

⁷² *QE* 2.29.

Jesus of Nazareth), of the Person within a Triune Deity designated the Son or Logos. Philo did perhaps think in terms of the deification of Moses, but not of an incarnation within Moses' life of the divine Logos.⁷³

Williamson's defense is carefully made faint. Philo never imagined Moses becoming a person of the Trinity, the concept of which had not yet been invented, but he did allow for the fact that Moses had been deified as the Logos.

The question to ask now is: Could Jesus have been thought of by his disciples as the Platonic/Philonic *Logos*? Could he have been considered to be the spring that waters the virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice, who plants the seeds of divine wisdom and brings nourishment and growth to souls that love God? Such a man who has acquired the ability to do these things, says Philo, is a King and shepherd of his people.⁷⁴ The sacred *Logos*, after all, is as a king, a teacher, a friend, and a counselor;⁷⁵ which of these was Jesus not? The holy *Logos* censures evil, cleanses us with the water of sprinkling, and brings us to the test clothed with richness of secrets of true philosophy.⁷⁶ Surely, "those whose souls have ears" would know these things.⁷⁷

Put another way, in order that a person who satisfied the above descriptions be thought of by his disciples as the divine *Logos*, then he or she

⁷³ Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 117-18.

⁷⁴ *Post.* 127-28; *Agr.* 50; *Migr.* 8-9, 197; *Mut.* 152; *Somn.* 2.244; *Abr.* 261.

⁷⁵ *Somn.* 1.191.

⁷⁶ *Somn.* 1.226.

⁷⁷ *Abr.* 127, 150; *Conf.* 72.

would had to have been either familiar with the thinking of Philo or else somehow knowledgeable of what Philo knew.

Philo's Kingdom of God

For Philo, the kingdom of God was the invisible, intelligible, noetic world, with God as its King and master.⁷⁸ To human beings, however, God's *Logos* was the effective King, in that the *Logos* was the only part of God that humans could reach, see, or be with in communication.⁷⁹ The Kingly *Logos*, or sovereign Reason of God, was installed in the soul of all humans by the *Logos*, our Creator.⁸⁰ That is, the *Logos* of God was the soul's creator that also placed a portion of itself within the wise soul.⁸¹ Another way of saying this is that the wise soul contains a portion of God's divine *Logos*.⁸² Our soul is both allied and akin to the divine *Logos*.⁸³ As God is the King of the Universe, God's *Logos* within us is the King of our person, with the senses intended to be the King's bodyguards.⁸⁴ This portion of the *Logos*, then, is the true king over the human body, both the

⁷⁸ *Gig.* 45-46; *Agr.* 51; *Abr.* 74-75.

⁷⁹ *Fug.* 10. Mind orders all things, as a regular government under a king. See *Somn.* 1.191, where *Logos* is as a king, teacher, friend and counselor.

⁸⁰ *Opif.* 139; *Fug.* 100-01. The *Logos* is the archetype of the human mind.

⁸¹ *Plant.* 58. The sovereignty of God is bestowed on wise souls with keen vision of the never-closing eye of the soul.

⁸² *Congr.* 134-35; *Fug.* 100-01. Philo reads Deut 10:9 as "God's soul is our portion."

⁸³ *Opif.* 145-46; *Praem.* 163.

⁸⁴ *Leg.* 3.115.

passions and senses.⁸⁵ The *Logos* can endow the soul as the king, governor, judge, and umpire over the passions and senses. The King, however, who was King from the first, is not recognized by the unschooled soul.⁸⁶

When virtues are acquired by a person's soul – wisdom, courage, temperance and justice – that person becomes a king.⁸⁷ The sage who possesses these four virtues is a king not of men, but a King from God.⁸⁸ The wise person is a king, and divine Wisdom is his or her kingship.⁸⁹ The Sage's kingdom comes by the gift of God.⁹⁰ Wisdom is the court and palace of the King and Sovereign Lord, which is a place perceived by the mind.⁹¹ Philo paraphrases Moses' speech:

[H]e says that God, the Mind [*Nous*] of the universe, has for his house his own word [*logos*] The House [*oikos*] of God is not this that is all round me, consisting of things at which we can point or that fall under sense-perception generally, no, not such is God's House, but invisible, withdrawn from sight, and apprehended only by soul as soul [*psychē*]. Who, then, can that House be, save the Word [*Logos*] who is antecedent to all that has come into existence?⁹²

⁸⁵ *Sac.* 8-10, 49.

⁸⁶ *Mut.* 17.

⁸⁷ *Post.* 127-28.

⁸⁸ *Somn.* 2.243.

⁸⁹ *Migr.* 197. See also Clement, in *Strom.* 2.5, who recognized that "Plato, moreover, has called the wise man a king in the Statesman" (ANF 2.352).

⁹⁰ *Abr.* 261.

⁹¹ *Congr.* 116.

⁹² *Migr.* 4-5. Note how this language describes the invisible, divine, house of God that is in Moses' presence, which is the divine *Logos* that existed before the created universe. Because Philo explains that God's house is God's *Logos*, it seems equivalent to say that God's House is

Conversely, the king of Egypt; that is, the material passions of the body attempt to usurp the intelligible Kingdom of God.⁹³ As a King, one must school himself or herself to rule; this begins by escaping from the prison-house of our senses and passions.⁹⁴ God the King has a high road to the Kingdom, which the *Logos* makes straight.⁹⁵ This road to the Kingdom of God is divine wisdom, leading to the recognition and knowledge of God; this is the *only* way for souls to come to God.⁹⁶ With wisdom, our souls are lifted on wings to the great King, the ruler of the universe.⁹⁷

What is overwhelmingly clear is that Philo considered the righteous philosopher to be a king within a kingdom ruled by God, a kingdom of wise kings, each wise in divine wisdom. To become a king within Philo's notion of the Kingdom of God required hard work that involved the study and understanding of both philosophy and Scripture together, with each providing insight, interpretation, and understanding of the other.

also God's Kingdom; that is, the Kingdom of God is the *Logos*, and Jesus' gospel may be interpreted accordingly.

⁹³ *Congr.* 118; *Abr.* 103.

⁹⁴ *Migr.* 8-9.

⁹⁵ *Gig.* 63-64; *Migr.* 146; *Fug.* 10; *Spec.* 1.334, where *nous* acts as a king bringing order. See Burton Mack, "Kingdom Sayings," 12-13, "Of particular importance for understanding the use of the language of *basileia* [kingdom or rule] in the early Jesus traditions appears to be its application by Stoics and Cynics [and Platonists] to the definition of the 'man of true excellence or sage.'" Mack has located three prime examples of Greek recognition of the kingdom of God as that of the philosophers: *Sentences of Sextus* 307-11; *Wis* 10:10; and Philo's *Spec.* 4.164.

⁹⁶ *Deus.* 143, 159-60; *Mut.* 152: "The sage alone is King."

⁹⁷ *Somn.* 1.140.

Philo's Growth of the Soul by Nourishment

Philo, like his master Plato, related divine knowledge to nourishment, and related the soul to a plant that grows when so nourished. Philo uses many of the same terms as Plato, especially the metaphors of the sowing (*speirō*) and growth (*trephō*) of the soul (*psychē*). Philo, however, adds one important factor: the allegorical interpretation of the *manna* of Exod 16:3-35. For Philo, as well as for the author of the Gospel of John, the *manna* from heaven represents imperishable divine knowledge from God.⁹⁸ In addition, both Philo and John use the metaphor of water representing divine knowledge that can result in eternal life.⁹⁹ Like Plato, Philo often mentions nourishment and growth of the human soul by ingestion of divine knowledge, through education or instruction made possible by the Reason or *Logos* of God.

When they sought what it is that nourished [*trephō*] the soul (for, as Moses says, "they knew not what it was" (Exod. 16:15), they became learners and found it to be a saying of God, that is the Divine Word [*logon theion*], from which all kinds of instruction and wisdom [*sophia*] flow in perpetual stream. This is the heavenly nourishment [*trophē*], and it is indicated as such in the sacred records, when the First Cause in his own person says, "Lo, it is I that am raining upon you bread out of the heaven; for in very deed God drops from above the ethereal wisdom [*sophia*] upon minds which are by nature apt and take delight in Contemplation; and they see it and taste it and are filled with pleasure, being fully aware of what they feel, but wholly ignorant of the cause which produced the feeling. This Divine ordinance fills the soul that has vision alike

⁹⁸ John 6:27-38.

⁹⁹ John 3:7-15. See also *Leg.* 2.87; *Post.* 129; *Fug.* 97, "*Logos* is fountain of wisdom," and *Somn.* 2.245, "the river of God ... stream of wisdom."

with light and sweetness, flashing forth the radiancy of truth, and
with the honied grace of persuasion¹⁰⁰

Philo's extensive development of divine nourishment of the soul as analogous to a seed and subsequent plant receiving rain has been studied thoroughly by Peder Borgen. Borgen finds that Philo has "been influenced by Platonic thought in his interpretation of *manna* as heavenly food for the soul, for Plato mentions the nourishment of the soul at several places."¹⁰¹ However, instead of tracing the history of Platonic thought to the Middle Platonists, Borgen concludes that there was a Palestinian tradition of nourishment with *manna*, and that there was a haggadic tradition working there that identified the Torah with bread, even though he can find but one obscure, late rabbinic text for support. Borgen is surely wrong about this notion's origin, for he has avoided the obvious link between nurturing the soul in Plato, Philo, and the Gospel of John, but instead has chosen a weak rabbinical link that, if it existed at all, surely itself has its very root in Hellenistic Platonism.¹⁰²

In consideration that God caused *manna* to rain down from heaven, Philo felt free to construct both water and food metaphors for heavenly nourishment of

¹⁰⁰ *Fug.* 137-39. (Colson & Whitaker, LCL) [brackets mine]. For God showering down philosophy from heaven to be received by the human mind, see also *Spec.* 3.185.

¹⁰¹ Peder Borgen, *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo* (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 129. He cites *Phaedr.* 246D-E, 247C-D, 248B-C; *Prot.* 313C and *Phaed.* 84A-B.

¹⁰² Borgen, *Bread*, 114, 130. Borgen cites *Numbers Rabbah* 7, 4. The later rabbis may have associated the Torah with heavenly knowledge. However, in order to make Borgen's conclusion work, the rabbis would have had to declare the Torah to be the sum-total of *all* divine knowledge, with any contribution by Platonic thought to be null and void; this, they could not do.

wisdom from the *Logos*. The Word (*Logos*) of God is the spring that waters the virtues, the spring and source of all noble conduct. When the intake of material food for the body is curtailed, the stream of knowledge from the fountain of Reason will flow pure and crystal clear with smooth course into the soul.¹⁰³ Even so, the *Logos* is more than a spring; it is a river from which flow words and doctrines, so sweet and fresh, that brings nourishment and growth (*trophē*) to souls that love God.¹⁰⁴ The *Logos* is the river of God, not of earth, and is full of the stream of wisdom.¹⁰⁵ The Divine *Logos* descends from the fountain of wisdom like a river, to lave and water the heaven-sent celestial shoots and plants of virtue-loving souls, as in a garden.¹⁰⁶ God, not the human, sows and builds virtues in the human soul, but only sets in plants capable of bearing fruit.¹⁰⁷

God is the savior, the nourisher (*trephō*), the enricher, of the soul.¹⁰⁸ The creator sowed the seed of hope in the rich soil of the rational soul.¹⁰⁹ Heaven rains upon us the nourishment of the soul.¹¹⁰ The human soul is like a plant, with God as the planter, who causes a perpetual and unceasing downpour of gifts by

¹⁰³ *Spec.* 2.202.

¹⁰⁴ *Post.* 127-28; *Fug.* 137-39.

¹⁰⁵ *Somn.* 2.245. Philo also refers to Psalm 64:9-10 in regard to heaven sent rain.

¹⁰⁶ *Somn.* 2.244.

¹⁰⁷ *Leg.* 1.48-49. See also *Leg.* 1.56-57, where God has planted trees of virtue in the soul; this is the tree of life of Gen 2:9 that can only be viewed through philosophy.

¹⁰⁸ *Congr.* 171; *Fug.* 67.

¹⁰⁹ *Praem.* 10-11.

¹¹⁰ *Deus.* 155.

God's grace.¹¹¹ Wisdom, the daughter of God, sows and begets in souls an aptness to learn.¹¹² The doctrines of divine knowledge that nourish the soul must be slowly chewed and masticated.¹¹³ This *manna* is the heavenly, incorruptible food for the soul, and is distributed to all in equal portions by the *Logos*, to maintain equality.¹¹⁴ This heavenly wisdom is sent from above to souls which yearn for the virtue of God, who sheds the gift of prudence in rich abundance, and whose grace waters the universe.¹¹⁵ God sows and reaps, and nourishes the growth; but essentially we reap ourselves.¹¹⁶ For the true harvest of the mind is stored in the basket of our reasoning facilities, and are the first fruits of the most excellent crop.¹¹⁷ The main stalk of wisdom is too big and heavy for us to carry, so those of keen mental vision need to cut a branch and cluster of fruit to show the fruits of noble living.¹¹⁸ Even if the soul is nearly dead, if a tiny seed (*sperma*) is left, the fairest and most precious thing in human life can spring forth.¹¹⁹

¹¹¹ *Plant.* 93.

¹¹² *Fug.* 52.

¹¹³ *Fug.* 174; *Leg.* 1.98.

¹¹⁴ *Her.* 79, 191. See also *Leg.* 3.161-63 about the soul being a portion of the divine that is nourished by the divine and fed by knowledge that does not decay, unlike the body that is fed by perishable meat and drink.

¹¹⁵ *Mut.* 259.

¹¹⁶ *Somn.* 2.76-77.

¹¹⁷ *Somn.* 2.272.

¹¹⁸ *Somn.* 2.171

¹¹⁹ *Praem.* 159-60, 172.

The seed of wisdom from the *Logos* can grow only in good soil; that is, a mind conditioned by the practice of virtue and pursuit of wisdom.¹²⁰ The educated mind cultivates an orchard that bears the fruit of the divine instead of passions, knowledge instead of ignorance, and good instead of evil, for a mind without wisdom is like a barren tree without fruit.¹²¹ The harmful shoots of the soul are like those of a plant that must be cut away in order for the tree to bear fruit.¹²² When the seed is planted in a soul of rich soil, the clouds send drops of wisdom; but the barren soul gets a blizzard.¹²³ The corrupted soul is like the farm with crop failures: locusts, worms, rotten fruit, and mildew.¹²⁴ Right teaching nourishes the soul and makes the mind grow, but teaching of a contrary sort has no nourishment and is a disease.¹²⁵ The soul that strives for wisdom is "like a happy husbandman who sees his whole crop safe and sound, thriving under his hand and bearing fruit."¹²⁶

In short, God's offer of nourishment to the soul is like a lender expecting the return of a sum of money entrusted, as the fruit of a tree grown in the soul's

¹²⁰ *Deus.* 39-40. See also *Leg.* 1.246, where deep and rich soil (the soul) grows the virtues of goodness and the thin and poor soil, those of the bad.

¹²¹ *Plant.* 97-98.

¹²² *Plant.* 100.

¹²³ *Her.* 204.

¹²⁴ *Praem.* 127.

¹²⁵ *Plant.* 114.

¹²⁶ *Praem.* 60 (Colson, LCL).

orchard.¹²⁷ God rewards the individual soul based on its size, of which God specifically makes a measurement (*metron*) and appraisal according to the rule of equality of the due portion to each.¹²⁸

This growth of the soul, to Philo, has two phases. Between the phases is a conversion, a passing from ignorance (*amathēs*) over to knowledge (*epistēmē*). All human souls, however, "before the reason (*logos*) in us is fully grown, lie in the borderline between vice and virtue with no bias to either side."¹²⁹ This conversion is only for the purified souls, who have grown sufficiently. Like the reptiles of Leviticus 11:21, though rooted to the earthly body, can leap upwards, so can the purified soul suddenly leap upwards, exchanging earth for heaven and corruption for immortality.¹³⁰ The wise person who seeks God journeys along the path that takes him through knowledge and wisdom. The wise person then comes to realize that God cannot be captured like a quarry, and thus he or she takes a stand, knowing that God is "at once close to us and far from us."¹³¹ This "quest of the Good and the Beautiful, even if the goal is missed, is sufficient of itself to give a foretaste of gladness."¹³²

¹²⁷ *Plant.* 101.

¹²⁸ *Mut.* 232. See also Plato's assessment of God's measure versus that of humans in Chapter 2. See also Matt 7:2; Mark 4:24; Luke 6:38, concerning God's justice in measurement of the soul.

¹²⁹ *Praem.* 62 (Colson, LCL).

¹³⁰ *Her.* 239.

¹³¹ *Post.* 18, 20 (Colson & Whitaker, LCL).

¹³² *Post.* 21 (Colson & Whitaker, LCL).

The Logos as Mediator between God and Man

To Philo, as well as to Plato, the *Logos* as the Reason of God is both the cause of nourishment, and the nourishment itself. The *Logos* is both the action and the thing acted on, both the nourisher and the nourishment. The *Logos*, as the cup-bearer of God, is both the Master of the Feast – the pourer of the draught – and the draught itself that the *Logos* pours.¹³³ That is, the Divine Reason acts to nourish souls by education. Yet what humans hope to learn, to acquire knowledge of, is divine Reason.

For Philo, God was transcendent but not silent in thought. God's thoughts were immanent and accessible to humans. God's thoughts were also knowable by enlightened humans. As Williamson says, "Perhaps the thought that was uppermost in Philo's mind when he used the term *Logos* was that of mediation."¹³⁴ It is through the *Logos*, and *only* through the *Logos*, that the human mind can catch a glimpse of God. God's *Logos* can be approached through the wisdom that comes through philosophical study, which is the main purpose of the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week.

But nothing so much assures its (study on the Sabbath)
predominance as that through it is best given the revelation of the
Father and Maker of all, for in it, as in a mirror, the mind has a

¹³³ *Somn.* 2.249.

¹³⁴ Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 105. Thomas H. Tobin, in "Was Philo a Middle Platonist? Some Suggestions," in *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, *SPhA* 5 (1993): 149, says that the concept of *Logos* as mediator is unique to Alexandrian Middle Platonism, a concept not taken up by later Middle Platonists.

vision of God as acting and creating the world and controlling all that is.¹³⁵

As noted above, the human soul is allied to the *Logos*, is akin to it, was made in its image, and is either a copy of it or a fragment or ray of it.¹³⁶ Even so, for the *Logos* to be able to nourish the human soul, the human soul must voluntarily enter a fellowship with it. This fellowship is achieved by abandoning the life of the flesh and living the life of reason. As Williamson says, "It is the *Logos* that brings man to repentance and salvation by entering the soul and making man aware of his sins and bidding them be cleared out in order that the *Logos* might be able to perform the necessary work of healing."¹³⁷

The *Logos* as Bridegroom of the Human Soul

According to Philo, the first phase of education; that of *preliminary studies*, seems to be a routine pursuit of philosophy that should result in the passions being under control by the practice of virtue. At this point, for some people, a conversion, the aforementioned great leap toward heaven, will occur. The confirmation of this conversion occurs when the divine *Logos* enters the human soul. The divine *Logos*, as *spermatikos*, "implants its seed" into human beings.¹³⁸ Philo, perhaps borrowing from Neo-Pythagorean sources, uses sexual imagery

¹³⁵ *Decal.* 98, 105 (Colson, LCL). See Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 106, for discussion. Note similarities to 1 Cor 13:12.

¹³⁶ E.g., *Opif.* 139, 146.

¹³⁷ Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 114. *Deus.* 134-35; cf. *Her.* 63-64.

¹³⁸ E.g., *Her.* 119.

to describe this conversion process. This imagery is carried out further by Philo's exegesis of the story of Abraham, his wife Sarah, and her handmaiden Hagar. To Philo, Hagar represented *preliminary studies*, or basic Greek education. Hagar was impregnated by Abraham, identified here as a person seeking wisdom.¹³⁹

For we are not capable as yet of receiving the impregnation of virtue unless we have first mated with her handmaiden, and the handmaiden of wisdom is the culture gained by the preliminary learning of the school course. For, just as in houses we have outer doors in front of the chamber doors, and in cities suburbs through which we can pass to the inner part, so the school course precedes virtue; the one is a road which leads to the other.¹⁴⁰

Hagar was the handmaiden of Sarah. Sarah represented real virtue.¹⁴¹

Thus, as did the suitors of Penelope, those seeking wisdom and virtue need to conquer first its handmaiden, which, to Philo, is preliminary Greek education.¹⁴²

Philo thus presents a mating of mind and virtue as an analogy to the physical sexual act.¹⁴³ Philo also broadens this analogy to describe God as husband and father of the universe, supplying "divine impregnation" to all who seek it.¹⁴⁴ Specifically, Philo describes the human soul (*psychē* is a feminine

¹³⁹ *Congr.* 23. Hagar is education. Abraham is mind. Sarah is virtue.

¹⁴⁰ *Congr.* 9-10.

¹⁴¹ *Congr.* 2. Sarah means "wisdom in me, the self-control in me." See also *Congr.* 6: "Sarah is the virtue which rules my soul." (Colson & Whitaker, LCL). In *Congr.* 36, Abraham is the husband of queen virtue.

¹⁴² In Homer's *Odyssey*, the suitors were denied sexual favors by the virtuous Penelope, but settled, temporarily, for her handmaidens, who were more accommodating.

¹⁴³ *Congr.* 12.

¹⁴⁴ *Det.* 147. See *Somn.* 2.237, where God is the lawful husband and father of the soul that is inclined to worship.

noun) as having as its lawful husband and lover, the *orthos logos*, or right Reason; that is, God's *Logos*. The soul and the *Logos* are mates by lawful marriage.¹⁴⁵ The participant, then, commits his or her mind and soul to a perfect practice of virtue, as in the commitment in a marriage between bride and groom. This mating can be terminated if the soul loses its virtue, or for any circumstance, chooses not to mate with the *Logos*: "But the soul that has once been dismissed from hearth and home as irreconcilable, has been expelled for all eternity, and can never return to her ancient abode."¹⁴⁶ This marriage is absolutely essential for the salvation of the soul. If it is terminated by being expelled from the "hearth and home" of the *Logos*, then it cannot ever return to heaven, the ancient abode of the soul prior to its incarnation into a body.

The notion of a lawful marriage between the human soul and the divine *Logos*, wherein the success of that marriage is an absolute condition for salvation and reward of the soul, implies some sort of ritual or ceremony associated with the marriage itself. Philo expounds on the fact he learned from natural philosophers – theologians – that this sacred marriage was between the Mind as the husband and virtue as the wife. The union in a marriage is between

¹⁴⁵ See also *Congr.* 59: "For the soul as a whole is the legitimate life-mate of reason" (Colson & Whitaker, LCL). Cf. *Somn.* 2.234, "Those who have wisdom for their life-mate" (Colson & Whitaker, LCL). See *Post.* 78-79, "But the fitting lot of those who have been held worthy of a wisdom (*sophia*) that needs no other teaching and no other learning is, apart from any agency of their own, to accept from God's hands Reason (*Logos*) as their plighted spouse, and to receive knowledge (*epistēmē*), which is partner in the life of the wise (*sophos*)" (Colson & Whitaker, LCL).

¹⁴⁶ *Det.* 149. Philo is commenting on Numbers 30. See also Kennedy, *Philo's Contribution*, 103-05, who notes the difference between the involuntary "sin" of ignorance described by Plato and Philo's description of an intentional turning away from God in favor of self.

two bodies, but "in the marriage made by wisdom it is between thoughts which seek purification (*katharsis*) and perfect virtues (*aretē*)."¹⁴⁷

It is difficult to determine the origins of Philo's concept of the sacred marriage between *Logos* and *Psyche*; it may be original with him but it likely stems back a century or so before Philo to Neo-Pythagorean thought. The spiritual marriage between the human soul and the *Logos* appears to be Greek in origin, although Jewish literature does have an analogous relationship of opposite gender. In Jewish literature, the yearning and hungry soul seeks Lady Wisdom, or, as often as not, she seeks him, as in Proverbs.¹⁴⁸ This seems different from a ceremony wherein the divine *Logos* marries the purified, virtuous *Psychē*; however, both versions may stem from the same Pythagorean source.

Nor does the Hermetic literature support a marriage between the male *Logos* and the female human soul. In *Corpus Hermeticum I*, the masculine *Logos* or Son of God descends from the Primal Divine Light/*Nous* to have intercourse with the feminine earth/ watery substance below, to result in the birth of the ordered world.¹⁴⁹ In *Corpus Hermeticum XIII*, the womb is intellectual Wisdom in silence, and the divine seed is the true Good.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ *Abr.* 100-01. Note that *nous* is male and *aretē* is a feminine noun.

¹⁴⁸ Song 3:2, 11; Prov 9:1-6; Wis 8:1.

¹⁴⁹ *Corpus Hermeticum I*, 9. See also Luther H. Martin, *Hellenistic Religions: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 148.

¹⁵⁰ *Corpus Hermeticum XIII*, 2.16-17, in Grese, *Corpus Hermeticum XIII*, 5.

Philo used the Neo-Pythagorean tradition concerning the sacred marriage between *Nous* and *Psyche*. The earliest mention of the marriage between *Nous* and *Psychē* is in Doric sentences that are attributed directly to Pythagoras:

Ψυχῆς γάμος ὁ πρὸς τὸν νοῦν ἱερός τε ἅμα καὶ ἐν φωτὶ ἀλεθινῷ
μυσταγωγούμενος. ὁ δὲ τῶν σωμάτων διάκαθαρσις καὶ σκότους.

Thus, “the marriage of the soul to *Nous* is sacred and celebrated in the true light, whereas bodily union takes place through impurity and darkness.”¹⁵¹ R. van den Broek has studied this Pythagorean sentence, along with the Nag Hammadi Codex treatise *Authentikos Logos* (*Authoritative Teaching*), which he finds to be Platonic, but not Gnostic. He notes the use of the imagery and relationship of the bridal chamber, the sacred marriage between *Nous* and *Psyche*, and the Wedding Banquet, which occur in Christian and Valentinian texts, and states that “the idea of the sacred marriage is not typically Gnostic.”¹⁵² It is not within the scope of this thesis to explore thoroughly the origin of these terms; however, it would appear that, if the Pythagorean Sentences are authentic at least back to the time of the Neo-Pythagoreans a century before, then the origin of the sacred marriage is Greek philosophy, not Jewish.¹⁵³ Roelof van den

¹⁵¹ The Pythagorean Sentences, #118, in Henry Chadwick, *The Sentences of Sextus: A Contribution to the History of Early Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 94. [From the Patmos manuscript from Hugh Lloyd-Jones at Corpus Christi College, Oxford (x).] This comparison of the marriage between bodies and that of the soul and the *Logos* was said by Philo in very similar terms in *Abr.* 100-01.

¹⁵² Broek, “Authentikos Logos,” 260-86.

¹⁵³ Broek, “Authentikos Logos,” 280, however, lumps the *Authentikos Logos*, the *Sentences of Sextus* and the *Teachings of Silvanus* together, considers them all to be Alexandrian, and places a date of compilation on them of around A.D. 200. He avoids comment on the date of the Pythagorean Sentences themselves. See Thesleff, *Pythagorean Writings*, 82,

Broek's analysis of *Authentikos Logos* shows that *Logos* is given by the divine *Nous* to *Psyche*, with *Logos* being accepted as food for the soul.¹⁵⁴ The purpose of this act is to drive out the passions and enlighten the soul for growth of divine knowledge; it is an act of redemption and salvation. Clearly, this marriage is a spiritual experience that a human has while the body is alive. Philo also considered that this was an experience of the living, for if it were an experience occurring at death, then the bride could not later reject the *Logos*.

The driving out of the passions by the divine *Logos*, the Reason or Word of God, is comparable to the action of Jesus in driving out personal demons by either the spirit of God or the finger of God (that had written the Jewish Law), and is a sign that the person involved has been purified and can enter the Kingdom of God.¹⁵⁵ When and only when a person has given up his or her demons of passion, especially those of lust and/or greed, then the Kingdom of God has come upon them.

for a well formed argument that the corpus of Pythagorean writings derive ultimately from the Pythagorean revival in the 4th century B.C.

See Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 108-109, for a discussion of sacred marriage. He admits that the evidence is scant, noting a tradition from a Sumerian King as the lover of a great goddess. Burkert describes the sacred marriage between Zeus and Hera, which was imitated in Greek religion as the sacred marriage between heaven and earth.

¹⁵⁴ Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 268.

¹⁵⁵ Matt 12:28; Luke 11:20.

CHAPTER 4

THE SPREAD OF THE APOLOGETIC TRADITION

From Philo to Jesus

The previous chapter addressed the fact that the theology inherent within Philo's works comes from a long line of Platonic, Pythagorean, and Stoic philosophers. The next chapter will show that Jesus' gospel of the Kingdom of God is consistent with Philo's thought, and can be seen as a development from Platonism. This chapter considers the ways and means that Philo's thought, or at least the Hellenized, Platonized thought of Alexandrian Jewish authors and lecturers, may have gotten to the *synagōgēs* in Jerusalem and Galilee that the Gospels say were frequently attended by Jesus.¹

Pagan Anti-Semitism and the Jewish Response

It does not seem likely that the philosophical approach to understanding Judaism that peaked during the Middle Platonist period in Alexandria spread into Palestine as a result of evangelizing Jews on a mission to obtain converts. It seems much more probable that intellectual Jews in Alexandria thought that they were fighting for their religion, if not their very lives, and decided to come up with an argument that not only justified their existence, but commanded respect from

¹ Conversely, for those who think that the Gospels were based on a myth made up by an early Jesus community in Judea, the question becomes: How did the aforementioned Hellenistic Jewish philosophy get to them?

their adversaries.² Indeed, the Greek Seleucid ruler, Antiochus IV, with inside help from the Hellenized High Priest Jason, had almost succeeded in eliminating Judaism by the thorough Hellenization of Jerusalem, which could have resulted in desecration of the Temple. The physical threat to eliminate Judaism was real. Modern scholars can realize just how real the threat was two centuries after Antiochus IV, when Gaius Caligula threatened to desecrate not only the Temple, but all Jewish religious practices throughout the Roman Empire. Had Caligula not have been assassinated, this desecration would have surely happened.

During the centuries of Hellenization, appeared popular writings appeared that were highly disrespectful to all Jews. Part of the problem, in Alexandria at least, was jealousy. The Jews had come to Alexandria in the reign of Ptolemy, and by Philo's time controlled two of the five parts of the city and occupied portions of the other three.³ A similar situation had occurred in Rhodes. Both locations festered resentment of the Jews: "Thus it happens that this island [Rhodes] appears in the literature as second only to Alexandria as a nest of anti-Semitism in the ancient world."⁴

Hans Conzelmann has shown a trajectory of hateful writings against the Jews that includes several Greek authors: Posidonius of Rhodes, who was

² Scot McKnight, in *A Light Among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 77-78, says "In other words, perhaps we ought to consider Jewish apologetic literature to have been written for Jews to bolster their influence in the Jewish faith in response to attacks on Judaism In short, it can be said that Judaism was not a missionary religion."

³ *Flacc.* 55.

⁴ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 69.

copied by Strabo, Appolonius Molon of Rhodes, Manetho the Egyptian priest, Lysimachus of Alexandria, Apion of Oasis and Alexandria, and Chaeremon of Alexandria, all before or concurrent with Philo. To a lesser extent, Plutarch, Epictetus, and Celsus continued the assault in the first centuries.⁵ For anti-Semitic Roman authors, the worst on his list is Juvenal. Against these writers, Jewish apologists had likely concluded that such hateful literature can very well precede civil or political action, and that it must be challenged. A difficulty was that the haters did not generally read the Jewish apologies. Conzelmann thinks that the effort from the Jewish apologists failed on the basis that Jewish writings, even if in the Greek language, were not considered by an educated Greek to be "literature."⁶ Conzelmann's conclusion that the effort failed is only valid if the sole purpose of the apologetic writings was to convince the Greco-Roman reader of the merits of the Jewish culture; but, as McKnight explained above, this does not seem to be the case.

Jewish Apologetic Literature

Conzelmann presents three possible purposes for the apologetic literature of the Jews: *apology*, which presents a formal argument intended to convince the Gentile reader of the superiority of Judaism to Greek or Greco-Roman religion,

⁵ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 67-96. He argues that Celsus attacks Jews and Christians alike. See also *Legat.* 120 for the acknowledgment of pent-up hatred of the Jews by the Alexandrian "promiscuous and unstable rabble" in Caligula's time.

⁶ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 140

philosophy, and culture; *edification*, which is intended to pacify the Jewish reader in light of disrespect often leading to persecution; and *missionary*, which intends to convert the Gentile over to Judaism.⁷ The *apology* purpose failed because the Gentile Greco-Romans did not read the apologetic material. The *missionary* purpose likely failed, if it was an authentic purpose at all, because Judaism required too much effort, such as subjecting oneself to circumcision. This leaves the *edification* purpose for the apologetic literature, written for and read by Jews, both Hellenistic and traditional. That this literature was written by Jews for Jews was a conclusion that was championed by Tcherikover.⁸ *Pace* Conzelmann, another category needs to be considered; that of a Jewish *training* of Jews for debate using apologetic literature, especially for debates that appealed to Greek philosophy. To categorize the bulk of the spectrum of Jewish apologetic literature as “feel good” edification misses the point. Philo and others realized the important need to prepare Jews – man, woman, and child – to answer charges from the Gentiles in an intellectually acceptable way consistent with the desired image of being a “nation of philosophers.”⁹ That is, the final purpose of the Jewish apologetic literature is to train Jews to fight back against the Gentiles, likely in public discussions, even confrontations, in order to command respect from their adversaries and thus keep the peace.

⁷ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 140–44.

⁸ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 139.

⁹ E.g., Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.176–81, 2.168–69, 280–86.

The Jewish answer to the disrespect shown them from the Greco-Roman writers, and from Greek Gentiles in general, includes a long list of texts cited by Conzelmann. To illustrate the approach to Jewish apologetics, only a few major contributions selected from this list need be discussed.

Additions to Esther

Conzelmann includes this to show “the inseparable connection between the Jew’s own self-edification and defense against the objections of outsiders.”¹⁰ Conzelmann may be correct in this case, but this text may also represent the poorest, and least effective, example of Jewish apologetic. The approach to the text shows an attempt that seems to indicate the starting place for this genre’s eventual development, which may very well have begun as edification. The Hebrew book of Esther was likely written before 200 B.C., followed by the Septuagint version in Greek, which included Additions to Esther, perhaps a century later, and then the so-called Alpha text, also in Greek. There are Hellenistic influences on all three versions. However, the Greek versions include several important additions. What is key is that the story has a villain, Haman, who negatively influences the Persian King Xerxes. Haman prepares a decree that sums up most of the anti-Jewish accusations popular at the time and calls for the killing of all Jews and the confiscation of their goods, and has the king issue the decree. Esther, the beautiful Jewess, along with her Jewish uncle

¹⁰ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 151-52.

Mordecai, and with the help of God, thwarts this plot, convinces the king of the evil of Haman and wins the king's admiration.

The book of Esther is a romantic and wonderful story that can be imagined being told by a wise old man who wanted to convey how clever and righteous his ancestors were, which might impress a great many hearers. However, to a critical listener, the story does little to address the problem at hand. In order for Esther to work as a Jewish apologetic, the listener has to accept the historicity of the events, which are long past if they happened at all. If the story is not believed to be true, then it quickly loses its value as apologetic. Furthermore, no counterarguments are given to the anti-Jewish claims. The general conclusion of the Greek versions is that one very bad person, a Greek, wanted to kill the Jews, but God and a brave woman prevented it.¹¹ While it does not seem today to represent an effective apology, it has to be examined in light of the stage of the conflict. It is not simple edification, but a like response to Egyptian propaganda of similar ilk. Greco-Egyptian writers such as Lysimachus and Chaeremon were busy writing romantic stories that "augmented the glory of Egypt by disparaging the Jews and giving derogatory accounts to their origins."¹²

¹¹ Kristin De Troyer, *The End of the Alpha Text of Esther: Translation and Narrative Technique in MT 8:1-17, LXX 8:1-17, and AT 7:14-41* (Atlanta: SBL, 2000), 299, says that the Alpha text "makes it clear from the beginning that Haman, the enemy, is 'a Macedonian.'" Although "the enemy of the Jews remains the Greeks," De Troyer speculates that the AT additions were "written in Rome around 40-41 CE by a Jewish author who addressed himself to non-Jews," and that the actual enemies at that time were the Romans (399, 402). De Troyer may be correct about the purpose of the AT, but the LXX version was against the Greeks.

¹² J. Collins, trans., "Artapanus," in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:892.

Eupolemus

Eupolemus was the first Jewish historian of record. He composed a work entitled *On the Kings of Judea*, of which only five fragments survive, and those thanks to Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius. The text can be dated to around 158 or 157 B.C.¹³ Conzelmann claims the book is for “internal Jewish edification, hardly for missionary or apologetic goals.”¹⁴ However, the text fits well with the category proposed above, that of Jewish training for defensive actions.

Eupolemus begins by saying “that Moses was the first wise man, that he first taught the alphabet to the Jews, and the Phoenicians received it from the Jews, and the Greeks received it from the Phoenicians, and that Moses first wrote laws for the Jews.”¹⁵ Also included are verses that discuss the building of a “temple for God, who created heaven and earth.”¹⁶ The focus seems to be a vivid description of the temple itself, of which the sanctuary used four million talents of gold and six hundred thousand talents of silver for the nails, plus incredibly more. In other words, the temple of the Jewish God, the creator of heaven and earth, was astronomically rich in gold, silver, and jewels, and hence very impressive.

Eupolemus’ book is not simple edification to make Jews feel good about their religious beliefs, but also includes a bit of braggadocio that would have

¹³ F. Fallon, trans., “Eupolemus,” in *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:861-72.

¹⁴ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 158. In agreement is Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:863.

¹⁵ Fallon, “Eupolemus” Fragment 1:26, in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:865.

¹⁶ Fallon, “Eupolemus” Fragments 1:31, 33, in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:867.

caused Greeks to back up a step or two. The Greeks and their knowledge, says Eupolemus, are thrice removed from the true wise man, Moses, who first taught the Jews, who then taught the Phoenicians, who then taught the Greeks. The Jewish historian Eupolemus had discovered three things that the Greeks highly respected: antiquity, wisdom, and teaching. From Eupolemus' work on, the Greeks had to contend with the claim that the Jewish notions of wisdom and divinity were established centuries prior to the earliest record of Greek writing, nevertheless the beginning of philosophy. This one-upsmanship of Jewish philosophic priority was to prevail throughout the Hellenistic era, and was the one claim that the Greeks never were able to contest adequately. Eupolemus, in a brilliant stroke of the quill, had perhaps found the Achilles' heel of Greek philosophy. What Eupolemus did not know was that, later, more sophisticated Jewish philosophers would have to prove this priority by relating their ancestral philosophy directly to that of Plato, which was the task to which Philo would dedicate much of his life.

Artapanus

Artapanus wrote his treatise *On the Jews* sometime in the 2nd century B.C., likely earlier than Eupolemus had written.¹⁷ Like Eupolemus, Artapanus was reacting against the hostile Egyptian writers as well as the Greeks, for his treatise describes Moses' cunning strategy and victory over the Egyptians.

¹⁷ J. Collins, "Artapanus," in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:890, says 3rd to 2nd Century B.C. Artapanus' Frag. 3 describes Moses' teaching.

What is of high interest here is that Artapanus introduces the notion that Moses was actually Mousaeus, the teacher of Orpheus! Furthermore, Moses invented philosophy, and was called Hermes! This is a further escalation of one-upsmanship over the Greeks, for Mousaeus and Orpheus were both considered to be semi-divine beings. Greek mythology has it that Orpheus, if he lived, lived no later than the century just before the Trojan War. If Moses lived in the 13th century B.C., then it is barely conceivable that Moses and Orpheus were contemporaries.¹⁸ The Golden Chain of Greek Philosophy, discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis, began with Orpheus. There is no higher appeal in the Greek chain of Philosophy than Orpheus, the founder of both philosophy and music, save perhaps the god Apollo. Yet, Artapanus would have Moses, the incarnate Hermes, as the teacher, that is, the master of Orpheus. Artapanus had succeeded in topping the Golden Chain of the Greeks, an incredible claim that could not be disproved. Insofar as the contest was "my teacher is older than your teacher," Artapanus had pushed the priority of Moses over Greek philosophy to the limit.¹⁹ No one will go farther.

Conzelmann says the goal of the treatise was the glorification of Judaism.

John. J. Collins seems to agree:

¹⁸ Any dating of the time of Orpheus requires great imagination. If his presence on the ship *Argos* in the time of Jason and Medea is used, a 13th or 14th century B.C. date might be allowed. See Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argon.* 1. 23-35. However, if Hippobotus is used, Orpheus was one of the Seven Sages, a contemporary with Pythagoras and Thales, and thus living in the 7th century B.C. (D. L., *Lives*, 1.41).

¹⁹ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 164, "This is the most uninhibited piece of writing that any Jewish author known to us has afforded himself."

The forgoing examples may suffice to set the work of Artapanus in the context of the competitive historiography of the Hellenistic age. The purpose of the work may be seen as an attempt to bolster Jewish ethnic pride in the Jewish community. A similar purpose, on a much more sophisticated level, may be attributed to such writers as Josephus and Philo. The work is apparently directed outward to any gentiles who might care to listen, but undoubtedly had its main effect on the self-esteem of the Jewish community.²⁰

Again, Collins has not considered the idea of training the rank and file Jew for intellectual combat, which goes well beyond a building up the Jewish individual's self-esteem. The statement that Moses had taught Orpheus, a pagan semi-God, does little for the self-esteem of a lesser-Hellenized Jew who might not be familiar with Greek mythology, nor want to be. To a more Hellenized Jew, however, this represents invaluable ammunition that may not be believed by his or her Greek adversary, but nevertheless cannot easily be refuted. This is not feel-good propaganda; these are fighting words.

Aristobulus

Aristobulus was an Alexandrian writer of the mid-second century B.C., who has come to be known as the first Jewish philosopher.²¹ His contribution is invaluable in that he specifically tied Jewish Scripture to Greek philosophy, and was the first to do so that we know of today. The claims made by Eupolemus and Artapanus that Jewish philosophy was prior to that of the Greeks were only

²⁰ J. Collins, "Artapanus," in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:892.

²¹ A. Yarbro Collins, trans., "Aristobulus," in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:831-36.

taunts compared to the approach of Aristobulus, who attempted to back up his claims with viable argument.

Aristobulus begins by saying that Moses invented philosophy, later to be appropriated by Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato, who all knew and used the Jewish law in their works. The Jewish law, says Aristobulus, had been translated well before the date of the Septuagint, before the conquest of Alexander, and even before the conquest by the Persians, which would put it near the time of Pythagoras' stay in Egypt. Aristobulus, in fact, uses certain Pythagorean terms and notions, such as the significance of the prime number seven as representative of the Jewish seven days of creation, the Sabbath, and the Pythagorean sevenfold principle of Reason (*Logos*).

Furthermore, Aristobulus intimately ties Moses together with the divine Mind of God or Zeus, an aspect of God that can only be imagined by ordinary humans through their reasoning qualified by their righteousness, but was indeed seen by the extraordinary Moses.

For all mortals have mortal pupils in their eyes, [too] small, since flesh and bones have produced them, [too] weak to see Zeus, the ruler of all. And no one has seen the ruler of mortal men, except a certain unique man, an offshoot from far back of the race of the Chaldeans. For he was knowledgeable about the path of the Star, and how the movement of the sphere goes around the earth, both in circular fashion, but each on its own axis.²²

Aristobulus thus ties the beginning of Greek philosophy to Moses the semi-divine teacher, and ties the divine *Logos* of the Greeks to the Wisdom of

²² A. Yarbro Collins, "Aristobulus," Fragment 4, in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:840. [Brackets original].

the Jews. Moses Hadas was succinct when he said "For us the most significant feature in Aristobulus is his apparent anticipation of Philo in the mode of his allegorical interpretation and in his use of the term *logos*."²³ A. Yarbro Collins agrees on the importance of Aristobulus.

The five fragments of Aristobulus' work seem to be part of an extended attempt to relate Jewish tradition to Hellenistic culture.... Aristobulus contributes to our knowledge of Hellenistic Judaism in that he is the first known Jewish philosopher.... He presupposes that reality is a unified whole and that there cannot be contradictions between the truth of Scripture and the truth of philosophy. ... His work is also of interest as an early and simple example of a theology which unites Jewish reflections on wisdom with Hellenistic ideas about the Logos.... These reflections of Aristobulus are important for anyone seeking to understand the role of the Logos in Philo's thought or in the Gospel of John.²⁴

It is important to realize that Aristobulus had tied the wisdom of the Jews to the *Logos* of the Greeks, which is the same as the *Nous* of Plato; that is, divine Reason. Accordingly, whatever Plato had said about divine Reason could be applied to Jewish Wisdom. It is difficult to overestimate this contribution. Without question, Greco-Roman philosophers would be very curious, if not astounded, by this declaration of divine unification from Aristobulus. There remained one big problem, which was left to Philo to solve. The problem is that in defense of these claims of Moses' priority, when the Pentateuch was finally read by the Greek and Greco-Roman philosophers, its literal meaning did not support what Aristobulus was claiming. In fact, its literal meaning was laughable. However, Aristobulus had

²³ Hadas, *Hellenistic Culture*, 101.

²⁴ A. Yarbro Collins, "Aristobulus," in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:831-35,

all but set up the validity of the allegorical method of exegesis by chiding those who demanded a literal meaning of the Torah.²⁵ What Philo later showed was that the Pentateuch had to be read and enlarged upon as an allegory in order to demonstrate its superior inherent philosophy.

Conzelmann seems wrong to conclude that Aristobulus wrote for Gentile readers. However, he cites Nikolaus Walter's conclusion, as an alternate view, that "the primary purpose is not the proving of the high age of Jewish philosophy but the justification of Judaism before the bar of Greek thought."²⁶ Walter's view would say that Aristobulus' work is a true apology, an argument to justify Judaism to the intellects of the Greek world.

The Letter of Aristeas

Although the *Letter of Aristeas* claims to be written during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, who ruled in the 285 B.C. time frame, it was likely written around 150 B.C., or even as late as 63 B.C.²⁷ The letter is best known for its portrayal of the translation of the Scriptures that resulted in the Septuagint; however, it tells much more that is important here for three reasons. The first is that it depicts each and every of the seventy-two Jewish translators as a learned philosopher capable of correctly answering a broad range of theological and

²⁵ Winston, "Philo and the Hellenistic Jewish Encounter," in *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, SPhA 7, 135.

²⁶ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 168. See also Nikolaus Walter, "Der Thorausleger Aristobulus," in *Texte und Untersuchungen* 86 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964), 28-29.

²⁷ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 170.

political questions, all intended to drive home the declaration that the Jewish nation is a nation of philosophers, with any of those present being capable of well advising a Greek king. The learned men depicted here had mastered the Jewish literature, and had made a serious study of that of the Greeks as well. The overall emphasis of the work is that most if not all Jews are true philosophers who know and appreciate the literature of both cultures.

The second reason is that the letter equates the God of the Jews to Zeus or whatever name one chooses for the Most High God. By declaring that "your God is our God," the problem of different gods between Jew and Greek is diffused. As R. J. H. Shutt observes, "The moral was the need for mutual recognition of different customs and cultures."²⁸

The third reason is that the theology of the Jewish philosophers, who represent all of Judaism, each and every of the twelve tribes, is significantly bending toward that of the Middle Platonist philosophers in several areas. The first example, mentioned above, is that the Greek name of God is acceptable for the God of the Jews, which is a big shift from the traditional Jewish reluctance to say or name God.

The second example is that the sovereign and fully transcendent God is the God of all humanity, not just of the Jews. Accordingly, the Jewish philosophers say, "Yes, indeed, O King, for since the whole universe is governed by providence, and on the correct assumption that man is a creature of God, it

²⁸ R. J. H. Shutt, trans., "Letter of Aristeeas," in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:10.

follows that all power and beauty of argument has its origin in God."²⁹ Another philosopher says, "In general everything is similarly constituted in regard to natural reasoning, being governed by one supreme power, and in each particular everything has a profound reason for it, both the things from which we abstain in use and those of which we partake."³⁰ The notion that Providence governs everything by Reason is commonplace Stoic philosophy with Platonic origins, and is certainly not traditional Jewish exegesis. The theology attributed to the Jews had now shifted to accommodate a better argument. Winston recognizes the contribution of the letter as indicating the presence of Jewish philosophical schools.

The door opened by Pseudo-Aristeas very likely contributed greatly to the formation of an entire school of Jewish philosophical exegesis of Scripture, and though the major part of its output has virtually disappeared, its single most outstanding and sparkling representative, Philo of Alexandria, has largely survived the wholesale shipwreck.³¹

As Conzelmann discusses, the formal apology, arranged in a catechetical form, begins half way through the letter with the denial that Moses was excessively preoccupied with mice and weasels, etc., to attempt to downplay the common criticisms of the Greeks that semi-god lawgivers do not lower themselves in this way.³² What Conzelmann does not address is that the entire

²⁹ Shutt, "Aristeas," 201, in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:26.

³⁰ Shutt, "Aristeas," 143, in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:22.

³¹ Winston, "Hellenistic Jewish Encounter," 124-42.

³² Shutt, "Aristeas," 144-71, in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:22-24.

work serves as an apology that informs Greek readers that the Jews comprise a nation of philosophers.

The Wisdom of Solomon

David Winston introduces the setting for *The Wisdom of Solomon* (*Wisdom*).

The *Wisdom of Solomon* is an exhortatory discourse written in Greek by a learned and thoroughly Hellenized Jew of Alexandria, after that city's conquest by Rome in 30 BCE, when the earlier optimism of the Alexandrian Jewish community for a growing rapprochement with the Greeks and for social and cultural acceptance for them, had been replaced by a mounting sense of disillusionment and disappointment.³³

By the time of *Wisdom*, the adverse situation had reached an even higher level of crisis that called for a major escalation of the war of words between the Jews and the Greeks, and by now the Greco-Romans. *Wisdom* provided such an escalation by putting several modified Platonic elements of theology into the mouth of Solomon himself, and thus predating Pythagoras by centuries. The key elements are that of (1) divine wisdom, now equated with divine *Logos*, (2) the preexistence and immortality of the soul as described by Plato but with any implication of either a fall from heaven or reincarnation carefully stripped out,³⁴ (3) the need for humans to pursue wisdom relentlessly as a means to salvation

³³ Winston, *Wisdom*, 3.

³⁴ Winston, *Wisdom*, 25-29.

and eventual union with God, and (4) the philosopher as representing the true king in the kingdom of God.

The genre of the work itself is that of an exhortation, or *logos protreptikos*, a protreptic that is written out so that it can easily be repeated again and again as a challenge for action, well beyond a pep talk, to its hearers.³⁵ It is not meant to argue the merits of Jewish philosophy to ordinary Gentiles, because it contains a significant amount of diatribe; that is, moral invective that would be sure to inflame people who do not subscribe to the tenets of Hellenistic Judaism.³⁶

Conzelmann agrees that *Wisdom* is "the most significant document in the development of the apology as a literary type prior to Philo."³⁷ What is even more important than Jewish apology as a genre, though, is its intended use. Winston says that:

The author is primarily addressing his fellow Jews in an effort to encourage them to take pride in their traditional faith. He seeks to convince them that *their* way of life, rooted in the worship of the One true God, is of an incomparably higher order than that of their pagan neighbors, whose idolatrous polytheism has sunk them into the mire of immorality.³⁸

Winston seems to be correct, but he does not go far enough into what might be the real motive. He would have us believe that *Wisdom*, and all the

³⁵ Winston, *Wisdom*, 18.

³⁶ Winston, *Wisdom*, 20. Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 174-75, says that the polemic in Chapters 1-5 is directed against Epicureanism, as does Joseph Reider, trans., *The Book of Wisdom: An English Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Harper, published for Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1957), 11-12.

³⁷ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 173.

³⁸ Winston, *Wisdom*, 63.

apologetic examples cited before, are intended to appease Jews who suffer under Greco-Roman anti-Semitism. This assumes that Jews at the time were in a helpless, passive state, trying to cope with their sufferings but not trying to correct their cause. However, the history of the unrest leading to the Jewish war in the following century shows that many of the Jews were anything but passive. They were trained by exhortations such as *Wisdom* to fight back with words, to command respect from their Greco-Roman adversaries by responding with arguments from a superior philosophy. This must have helped, but when words no longer worked, physical rebellion began.

The Jews in Palestine in the first century were intimate enough with exhortations such as *Wisdom* to cause them to trust their immortal souls on the truth of the doctrines of the Hellenistic Jewish writers familiar with Middle Platonism. Consider Josephus' account of the exhortation given to the Jewish Zealots at Masada during the Jewish War against Roman troops by their leader Eleazar. These troops, when faced with certain death, gave up their lives rather than subject themselves to slavery. This exhortation uses Hellenistic theology to convince the Jewish zealots³⁹ to loose their immortal souls from their bodies.

And as soon as ever we could use our reason, continually taught us, and our forefathers have corroborated the same doctrine by their actions and by their bravery of mind, that it is life that is a calamity to men, and not death; for this last affords our souls their liberty, and sends them by a removal into their own place of purity,

³⁹ These Zealots very well may have been Galilean revolutionaries, says Sean Freyne, *Galilee and Gospel: Collected Essays* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 27. Suicide was not condoned by Platonic philosophy unless death was inevitable and near. Philo recognized suicide during war in *Spec.* 3.160-62.

where they are to be insensible to all sorts of misery; for, while souls are tied down to a mortal body, they are partakers of its miseries; and really, to speak the truth, they are themselves dead; for the union of what is divine to what is mortal is disagreeable. It is true, the power of the soul is great, even when it is imprisoned in a mortal body; for by moving it after a way that is invisible, it makes the body a sensible instrument, and causes it to advance farther in its actions than mortal nature could otherwise do. However, when it is freed from that weight which draws it down to the earth and is connected with it, it obtains its own proper place, and does then become a partaker in that blessed power, and those abilities, which are then every way incapable of being hindered in their operations. It continues invisible, indeed to the eyes of men, as does God himself; for certainly it is not itself seen, while it is in the body; for it is there after an invisible manner, and when it is freed from it, it is still not seen. It is this soul which hath one nature, and that an incorruptible one also; but yet it is the cause of the change that is made in the body; for whatsoever it be which the soul touches, that lives and flourishes; and from whatsoever it is removed, that withers away and dies; such a degree is there in it of immortality. Let me produce the state of sleep as a most evident demonstration of the truth of what I say; wherein souls, when the body does not distract them, have the sweetest rest depending upon themselves, and conversing with God, by their alliance to him.⁴⁰

This passage by Josephus is remarkable in its unabashed Platonism. It is a speech that Socrates might have given his friends in their hour of death. The invisible soul is clearly immortal and separable from the body at death, to continue on to its place of purity if and only if it has been freed from the passions of the body, and ultimately to communion with God. There is no mention of reincarnation here, for the Hellenized Jews, following the Middle Platonists, have discarded that ambiguous notion of Plato's while accepting Plato's notion of either eternal reward or punishment after death. If Josephus is anyway near

⁴⁰ *J.W.* 7.8, in *The Works of Josephus* (trans. William Whiston; 1738; 4 vols.; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974), 1.509-10. Cf. Josephus' similar speech to his followers in *J.W.* 3.8.

accurate, these Jews were thoroughly Hellenized, enough to wager their immortal souls on the likelihood of eternal reward.

The doctrines inherent in Hellenistic writings such as *Wisdom* got into the minds of Palestinian Jews by the sending out of teachers trained in Alexandria to spread the message. James M. Reese describes the motive of the sage who authored *Wisdom*, who Reese says was a teacher of a group of motivated students.

The evidence converges to indicate that only a group of Hellenistic Jewish students, trained not only in their own religious traditions, but also in Greek literature and philosophy, in rhetoric and science *could* have been capable of appreciating the Sage's artistry and allusions. And only members of a group actually occupied in scholarly pursuits *would* have been disposed to follow such an artificial presentation.⁴¹

Joseph Reider has determined the purpose and setting of *Wisdom*.

There can be no doubt that the purpose of the Book of Wisdom is primarily to strengthen the faith of the pious Jews, to convert the apostate or renegade Jews to such a faith, and to convince the heathen of the folly of their idolatry. ... Judaism in Alexandria was passing through a great crisis. ... Thus the Book of Wisdom is really a polemic work.⁴²

Reider thus subscribes to the edification view but recognizes that *Wisdom* is designed to pull the strays back into the mainstream. That is, the content and message of *Wisdom* is intended to convert renegade Epicurean Jews back into an acceptable form of Hellenized Judaism. However, the pupils of the Sage were neither apostate nor renegade Jews, and hardly Epicureans. The more correct

⁴¹ Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 146.

⁴² Reider, *Book of Wisdom*, 10-12.

conclusion is that the Sage was teaching the teachers who later could convert the apostate or renegade Jews.

Reese falls short in explaining just what these highly educated students, fired-up by this exhortation, planned to do with their education. The very least that can be expected from these groups of students is that they would educate their fellow Jews in the *synagōgēs*, as Philo explains. More likely, it can be expected that the students would become evangelists of this Jewish philosophy and spread the word to other *synagōgēs*, including those in Palestine, and in particular, Galilee. Furthermore, it seems reasonable that some of these fired-up students of the Sage passed through Hellenized Galilee and stayed for a while.

The Fourth Book of Maccabees

The Fourth Book of Maccabees is also known as *On the Sovereignty of Reason* because it deals with the Platonic notion of attaining the cardinal virtues that result in control, not extirpation, of the passions. Moses Hadas is one of the most noted scholars of this text.

As his familiarity with Scripture and his accurate knowledge of the requirements of the Law show, our author is at home in the Jewish tradition to which he so warmly urges loyalty; but the philosophic structure of his thought is Greek. Plato is not merely an armory of adventitious arguments to confuse the pagans with their own weapons, but a way of thought espoused by our author and presumably by his audience. From Plato comes such specific doctrine as the four cardinal virtues, the two parts of the soul, the destiny of human beings after death, the question of the animality of the stars. These things, it is clear, our author drew directly from

Plato, and not from secondary sources, just as he was quite obviously at home with the tragic poets.

If we look for a single Platonic treatise which might have been in his mind as a model, we should choose the *Gorgias*.⁴³

The author, similar to other late writers of Jewish apologetics, reinforces his Platonism with Jewish doctrine and *not* the other way around. He basically “stands with Philo, as against pagan philosophers or against Palestinian Judaism.”⁴⁴ As Winston points out, the message that “the sage is a king” is hard to miss, being in three places (2.23, 7.23, and 14.2).⁴⁵ Of these, the most powerful is as follows.

To the intellect He [God] gave the Law; and he who lives subject to it shall reign over a realm of temperance, and justice, and goodness, and courage (*basileusei basileian sōphrona te kai dikaian kai agathēkai andreian*) (2.23).⁴⁶

Here, the kingship of the sage is wrapped up with the four cardinal virtues of Plato, and adherence to these virtues is equated to living subject to the Jewish law. What the author has almost but not quite said was that if one lives according to the Platonic virtues, then he or she is living compliant to the Jewish law; Jesus will take that last step, using parables to teach the merits of the four virtues. This is a very important statement that supports this thesis: that a Hellenistic Jew’s

⁴³ Hadas, *Third and Fourth Books*, 115-16.

⁴⁴ Hadas, *Third and Fourth Books*, 117, 121.

⁴⁵ Winston, “Hellenistic Jewish Encounter,” 132.

⁴⁶ 4 Macc. 2:23, in Hadas, *Third and Fourth Books*, 156-57. [Brackets mine].

practice of virtue is equivalent to the adherence of the Mosaic law, insofar as individual salvation is concerned.

Furthermore, the text not only equates the sage with kingship, but kingship with divine Reason: "O Reason, more kingly than kings" (*O basileōn logismoī basilikōteroi*)(14.2).⁴⁷ Again, it is but a small step further to say that Reason is the Kingdom of God.

Hadas speculates that the text was written around the time of Caligula, in 37-41, and perhaps in Antioch.⁴⁸ If it was written in the same decade as Jesus taught, then it represents the very last of the Jewish apologetic phase. The positions were now hardened to the point where the observance of the Platonic virtues was the equivalent of righteousness under the Mosaic law, both representing the highest ideal. The person who has mastered the Platonic ideal is worthy of facing death.

Philo's Apologies

As might be expected, the works of Philo include a very large amount of what can be termed apology. Insofar as the genre of apology is concerned, Conzelmann cites Philo's *Hypothetica*, *De Vita Contemplativa*, *De Decalogo*, *De Specialibus Legibus*, *In Flaccum*, *Legatio ad Gaium*, *De Josepho*, and *De Vita*

⁴⁷ 4 Macc. 14.2, in Hadas, *Third and Fourth Books*, 214-15.

⁴⁸ Hadas, *Third and Fourth Books*, 96, 110.

Mosis.⁴⁹ The methods used by Philo to argue for the priority and superiority of the philosophy found in the Pentateuch using the allegorical method have been discussed in the previous chapter. The issue addressed here concerns how the notions developed or repeated by Philo may have become known to certain Galilean Jews.

Despite the large volume of Philo's writings extant today, there is not an overabundance of information concerning either the purpose of the writings or the audience that Philo intended to reach. Clearly, Philo had dedicated a vast amount of time to studying and writing. It is also known that he was from a wealthy family, perhaps the wealthiest in Alexandria, a city of myriads of Jewish occupants, and the second largest city in the Roman Empire.⁵⁰ Philo had the financial resources to spend all of his time, if he chose, in writing and lecturing, and to publish his own books. The audience who might purchase his books, if they were offered for sale, would be small indeed, likely only other wealthy Jewish intellectuals.⁵¹ It can be safely said that Jesus never purchased, nor was given, nor read, any of Philo's books, even if the fact is accepted that Jesus knew at least some Greek. What seems likely was that Philo's wealth allowed him to give his books to worthwhile academic friends who he encouraged to become

⁴⁹ Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 185-203. Unfortunately, the bulk of Philo's major Jewish apologetic work, *Hypoth.*, is not extant.

⁵⁰ Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 2, 6. *Legat.* 350, "many myriads of Alexandrian Jews." *Flacc.* 43, 55.

⁵¹ Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 6. Alexandria was the home of many authors such as Philo, although not likely as wealthy. "Philo's works, themselves numerous, represent only a part of the literary activity and output of Alexandria."

teachers, and also to other interested scholarly parties. Philo was unquestionably well known and respected in the Alexandrian Jewish community, as ascertained by the fact that he was chosen to head up a delegation to confront the Roman emperor Gaius Caligula in A. D. 40 or so. As Josephus says, Philo was “eminent on all accounts” and “not unskillful in philosophy.”⁵² It does not seem possible that he wrote his work but chose not to disseminate it to students and other scholars.

Philo was quite familiar, perhaps expert, on the operation of the Temple at Jerusalem. Jutta Leonhardt complains that although he explains the philosophical educational aspects of the *synagōgē*. Philo does not offer any information about synagogue prayer. The general difficulty with trying to determine if Philo had first-hand experience with the operations of the Temple is that he generally clothes Jewish worship in Hellenistic forms, even describing Judaism as one of the Hellenistic cults.⁵³ Leonhardt discusses the likeliness of Philo's observation of *synagōgē* activities.

On the other hand, Philo describes ancient, mostly biblical, customs – such as the Sabbath rest, the synagogue meetings and study, the festivals in the Temple, the conscientious fast on the Day of Atonement, the practice of the Nazirite vow, the payment of the Temple taxes, the daily and weekly sacrifices, plus those on the festivals and for specific reasons, and the purification rites for the ashes of the red heifer – and implies that they are observed in his time.⁵⁴

⁵² *Ant.* 18.8.1.

⁵³ Jutta Leonhardt, *Jewish Worship in Philo of Alexandria* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 288-93.

⁵⁴ Leonhardt, *Jewish Worship*, 278.

Philo visited the Temple at Jerusalem at least once and likely many times.⁵⁵ Philo gives an elaborate description of the Temple in Jerusalem, but some of this material may have come from secondary sources, rather than first-hand.⁵⁶ The conclusion is that although Philo visited Jerusalem and participated in the Temple service, likely without regularity, it would be speculative to say, as did Goodenough, that Philo gave lectures there.⁵⁷ Winston has even considered that Philo was in fact a preacher.⁵⁸

Of much higher probability is that Philo regularly lectured, and perhaps donated books as gifts, to students of ancestral philosophy in Alexandria. He certainly seems more of a scholar–philosopher than a pious Jew who spends significant time at prayer service and annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem. Burton Mack agrees that Philo was a teacher of some sort.

Reconstructions of Philo's place in a real world have shown him to be not at all a recluse or a misfit. On the contrary, Philo turns out to have been a leading citizen of Alexandria, fully acquainted with all of its affairs and participant in its civic functions. Within the Jewish community Philo appears to have been an intellectual leader as well, a teacher in fact in some form of synagogue school pursuing an exegetical and homiletical project with at least one hundred and fifty years of tradition behind it. Thus there is every reason to believe that Philo's project was not idiosyncratic, and not merely an intellectual adventure in philosophical speculation, but a collective

⁵⁵ *Prov.* 2.64. Philo had traveled to Jerusalem through Ascalon. He implies that this visit was not unordinary or solitary.

⁵⁶ See especially *Spec.* 1.66-78. In 71, Philo notes that the craftsmen have bestowed extreme care in the construction, and have produced a perfect piece of work, implying that he has examined it himself.

⁵⁷ Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 1.180.

⁵⁸ Winston, "Hellenistic Jewish Encounter," 124.

effort to find a place for things Jewish in the larger order of the Greco-Roman world.⁵⁹

Philo seems adamant to demonstrate that the Sabbath *synagōgē* service is more for philosophical discussion and training in apologetics than for anything else.⁶⁰ In an oft-quoted passage, Philo states unequivocally the widespread practice of the teaching of essentially Platonic philosophy in the *synagōgē* on the Sabbath.

For the law bids us take the time for studying philosophy and therefore improve the soul and the dominant mind. So each seventh day there stand wide open in every city thousands of schools (*didaskaleia*) of good sense, temperance, courage, justice and the other virtues in which the scholars sit in order quietly with ears alert and with full attention, so much do they thirst for the draught which the teacher's words supply, while one of special experience rises and sets forth what is the best and sure to be profitable and will make the whole of life grow to something better.⁶¹

These Sabbath sessions were not just to study philosophy; they were for philosophical *training (paideuontai philosophian)*.⁶² Furthermore, at least for the scholars that Philo calls the Essenes, the philosophical training was specifically

⁵⁹ Burton Mack, "Wisdom and Apocalyptic in Philo," in *Heirs of the Septuagint: Philo, Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity*, SPhA 3 (1991), 29. See also Bruce Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 95-108, for discussion of the abilities of Philo for oration and debate.

It is important to remember that four New Testament traditions say that Jesus was a teacher in the *synagōgē* setting, according to Matt 13:54; Mark 1:21, 6:2; Luke 6:6 and John 6:59.

⁶⁰ *Hypoth.* 7.11-15; *Contempl.* 30-31. See also Leonhardt, *Jewish Worship*, 287, "In this way, every Jew is trained to lead and defend their life-style without the help of experts."

⁶¹ *Spec.* 2.61-62 (Colson, LCL). See also *Decal.* 98, "turn to the study of wisdom;" *Somn.* 2.127, "discussing at length your ancestral philosophy;" *Mos.* 2.215-16.

⁶² *Legat.* 156.

in the use of allegory of Scripture. Philo says: "For most of their philosophical study takes the form of allegory and in this they emulate the tradition of the past."⁶³ Certainly, some of these students became preachers accomplished in theology and allegorization of Scripture, as heard personally by Philo.⁶⁴

It seems valid to conclude from Philo's writings that the Sabbath in Alexandria was spent as a day with (male) Jews gathering for study and contemplation with no worship whatsoever.⁶⁵ Philo does not say that the Sabbath was spent with simple reading and listening to the Torah being read. In fact, he openly admires the Therapeutae, a dedicated group of philosophers who study every day alone, who then, on the Sabbath, meet together in a general assembly with convivial meals where women, although seated separately, actively participate in the audience for the discussion of philosophy. The Therapeutae can be described as being dedicated Platonic/Pythagorean philosophers who, accordingly, possess an art of healing of souls that are "oppressed with grievous and well-nigh incurable diseases, inflicted by pleasures and desires and griefs

⁶³ *Prob.* 81-82.

⁶⁴ See *Abr.* 99; *Mos.* 2.216; *Jos.* 151.

⁶⁵ So says Heather A. McKay, *Sabbath and Synagogue: The Question of Sabbath Worship in Ancient Judaism* (Boston: Brill Academic, 2001), 73-74. McKay has been criticized by Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 134, and others for concluding that worship on the Sabbath did not take place until the 3rd century. McKay is in the difficult place of trying to prove that something did not happen. Nevertheless, McKay argues for the Sabbath as being a day that centered on the reading of sacred texts with accompanying instruction. There is general agreement that the Torah was read and interpreted on the Sabbath in the *synagōgē*. What is unknown is *how* it was interpreted – literally or allegorically, with the latter being the standard practice in Alexandria according to Philo. Likely, both methods of interpretations were welcome, with allegorical interpreters invited to offer additional exhortation, as stated in Acts 13:15.

and fears, by acts of covetousness, folly and injustice and the countless host of the other passions and vices."⁶⁶ These Therapeutae seem like mystical Platonists who pursue knowledge so intently that even though they become "carried away by a heaven-sent passion of love, remain rapt and possessed like bacchanals or corybants until they see the object of their yearning."⁶⁷ During the week, they study the texts using the allegorical method.

The interval between early morning and evening is spent entirely in spiritual exercise. They read the Holy Scriptures and seek wisdom from their ancestral philosophy by taking it as allegory, since they think that the words of the literal text are symbols of something whose hidden nature is revealed by studying the underlying meaning. They also have writings of men of old, the founders of their way of thinking, who left many memorials of the form used in allegorical interpretation and these they take as a kind of archetype and imitate the method in which this principle is carried out.⁶⁸

Philo says that these Therapeutae have already divested themselves of their possessions and their families, and can be found around *any* city, usually in quiet gardens outside the city walls. They especially are attracted to live near a particularly pleasant hill and lake area around Alexandria.⁶⁹

Philo cannot conceal his admiration for the Therapeutae, especially for their self-control and love of wisdom. Philo describes them as preferring the allegorical method of scriptural interpretation, which can only mean that they interpret Jewish Scripture along the lines of Greek philosophy, as does Philo. On

⁶⁶ *Contempl.* 2 (Colson, LCL).

⁶⁷ *Contempl.* 11-12 (Colson, LCL).

⁶⁸ *Contempl.* 28-29 (Colson, LCL).

⁶⁹ *Contempl.* 20-23.

the Sabbath, which they consider as sacred and festal, they discuss this “holy philosophy” with each other in an assembly, actually a dedicated building. Their discussion is within easy hearing distance of women and outsiders, who may contribute “with ardour.” What Philo describes here is an informal school of philosophy, open to outsiders on the Sabbath, but with dedicated teachers who study their subjects on a full time basis. A direct connecting line between these philosophers and Jesus of Galilee cannot be drawn. However, it is important to note that not only did Alexandria possess formal schools of Jewish philosophy, such as Philo must have frequented, that were attended by the Hellenized Jewish elite, but the city also had informal schools of high caliber. Philo calls the philosophical sessions within the *synagōgē didaskaleia*, clearly a school.⁷⁰ That is, the informal and formal schools of Alexandria must have educated many Hellenistic Jewish philosophers, certainly hundreds. In addition, the knowledge obtained at the *synagōgē* that concerns the defense of the Hellenized Jews against criticism by Greeks, is to be passed from husband to wife, from father to child, from master to slave, so that every Jew, man woman, child, or slave, can defend against an intellectual attack.⁷¹

⁷⁰ See Mos. 2.216, “For what are our places of prayer (*proseuktēria*) throughout the cities but schools (*didaskaleia*) of prudence and courage and temperance and justice and also of piety, holiness, and every virtue by which duties to God and men are discerned and rightly performed?”

⁷¹ *Hypoth.* 7.14–15.

The Apologies of Josephus, Especially *Against Apion*

Josephus wrote in the late first century when Jewish apologetics were almost useless due to the Romans having subjected the Jews to slavery or dispersal. As Conzelmann says about Josephus: "He gathers up the apologetic approaches of his predecessors, combines them into a whole that he reinterprets and presents to the situation that had been completely changed by the Jewish War."⁷² Earlier in this chapter, it was shown that Josephus was knowledgeable in Platonic thought and considered his fellow soldiers in the Jewish War to also be Platonists. In *Against Apion*, however, Josephus dramatically emphasizes several points concerning the superiority of Jewish philosophy over that of the Greeks. These points are: (1) Jewish philosophy is five thousand years old, thus much older than that of the Greeks.⁷³ (2) Pythagoras himself, the highest of the Greek philosophers, knew and admired the Jewish institutions and appropriated many elements of the Jewish law into his philosophy.⁷⁴ (3) Aristotle knew several Jewish philosophers. One of whom he particularly admired "not only spoke Greek, but had the soul of a Greek."⁷⁵ (4) The Greek philosophers, who learnt about God from Moses' teachings, accordingly held similar views to that of the

⁷² Conzelmann, *Gentiles*, 203.

⁷³ *C. Ap.* 1.1.

⁷⁴ *C. Ap.* 1.162-65.

⁷⁵ *C. Ap.* 1.177-81 (Thackeray, LCL).

Jews. The Greeks, however, refused to “divulge their true beliefs to the masses who had their own preconceived opinions,” whereas Moses and his contemporaries “firmly implanted this belief concerning God in their descendants to all future generations.”⁷⁶ (5) Plato, as outstanding as he was, was not without some shortcomings. Plato’s laws are easier than that of the Jews. Plato recognized that “it is hazardous to divulge the truth about God to the Mob,” but the Jews do exactly that.⁷⁷ (6) In summary, the Greek philosophers, “in their conduct and philosophy were Moses’ disciples, holding similar views about God and advocating the simple life and friendly communion between man and man.”⁷⁸

In *Against Apion*, Josephus, writing to a Roman audience, repeats, expands, and provides specific examples of what Hellenized Jewish apologists had been saying for centuries to their fellow Jews: The ancestral philosophy of the Jews is more ancient and more accurate than that of the Greeks. Josephus, promulgates the theme that had become the major driver for the early Jewish Christians; that is, the Greek philosophers had access to the truth but did nothing with it, preferring instead to keep it secret among the few. It is factual that the apologetic Hellenistic Jews, then Jesus, then the early Jewish Christians, took their particular message to the masses until nearly everyone who had been exposed was inculcated in their religious philosophy.

⁷⁶ C. Ap. 2.168-70 (Thackeray, LCL).

⁷⁷ C. Ap. 2.223-24 (Thackeray, LCL). Josephus is referring to *Tim.* 28C here.

⁷⁸ C. Ap. 2.281-82 (Thackeray, LCL).

The Mission of the Teachers

Adolf Harnack was convinced that there was a Jewish mission that had intentions to convert Gentiles to Judaism, that the aforementioned apologetic works were propaganda for this unsuccessful Jewish cause, and that the Jew's missionary policies had set the stage for later Christian activity that succeeded where the Jews had failed. As Shaye J. D. Cohen has noted, Harnack's thesis represented Christian dogma, not Jewish history.⁷⁹ The question continues to arise as to what the purpose was of the aforementioned texts if not to aid in the conversion of Gentiles to Judaism.

Cohen elsewhere offers an observation about the importance of philosophy to the Jews.

No area of Hellenistic culture influenced the Jews as much as philosophy. The God of the Hebrew Bible is very different from the supreme God of Plato or Aristotle. The former is a anthropomorphic being capable of anger, joy, and other emotions, who created the world and continues to direct human affairs. The God of the philosophers, however, was a much less human and much more abstract figure, incapable of emotion, and far removed from the daily concerns of humanity. Many Jews tried to combine these two conceptions, or, more precisely, to reinterpret the God of the Bible in the light of the ideas of the philosophers, especially Plato. In his numerous essays on the Torah, Philo tried to demonstrate that the God of Judaism was very like the God of Plato, and that the stories of Genesis were not mere amusing diversions but hid profound philosophical truths. This approach to scripture was developed even further by Origen, Ambrose, and other fathers of the church,

⁷⁹ Adolf von Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries* (trans. and ed. James D. Moffatt; New York: Putnam, 1905). See also Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Adolph Harnack's 'The Mission and Expansion of Judaism': Christianity Succeeds Where Judaism Fails," in *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester* (ed. Birger A. Pearson et al.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 163-69.

but its first great exponent was Philo and its origins reach back to Alexandrian Jewry of the third century B.C.E.

The impact of "philosophy" upon Judaism went much deeper than the exegetical essays of Philo. Much of the Jewish thinking on the questions of fate, free will, immortality, and divine providence was influenced by, or at least was expressed in, the terminology of Greek philosophy. Many authors, even those of a decidedly non-philosophic character (like Josephus), present Judaism as a "philosophy," a system of practice and thought that cultivated pagans could appreciate and admire.⁸⁰

John Collins also questions the idea of a Jewish mission to convert the Gentiles. He notes that the *synagōgē* schools described by Philo indeed did attract Greeks into Judaism, as emphasized by Josephus, but that this proselytizing activity by Jews "scarcely amounts to a missionary movement, however."⁸¹ Collins views the language of missionary activity of the Pharisees as described in the New Testament, "for you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves," as an idiomatic expression, but even so, something was going on that was intensely competitive.⁸² Collins says that the Pharisees were trying to convert Hellenistic Jews into the Pharisaic *Halakah*. If this is true, then different factions of Jews were trying to convert each other, or trying to bring the "lost sheep of Israel" into their particular fold.

⁸⁰ Shaye J. D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 44.

⁸¹ J. Collins, *Between Athens*, 262-63. *Mos.* 2.17; *J.W.* 7.3.3; *Ant.* 20.2.3-4.

⁸² J. Collins, *Between Athens*, 263. *Matt* 23:15.

The Hellenistic Jewish literature, says Collins, "was not composed as part of a great Jewish missionary endeavor to convert the Gentiles."⁸³ In agreement with Conzelmann on this point, Collins adds, "[V]irtually all of this literature is engaged in an apologetic enterprise, to justify the rationality and even superiority of Judaism by Hellenistic canons, for the benefit of the Jews themselves, if not of the Gentiles."⁸⁴ Hengel had gone a little further.

Even if these writings are addressed predominantly to a Jewish public or one that sympathized with Judaism, they still raise the supra-national claim to represent true 'wisdom,' true philosophy, and are thus at the same time an expression of the missionary expansion of Greek-speaking Judaism of the Hellenistic and Roman period. Thus they represented an ethical monotheism grounded in the doctrine of creation, to which the missionary preaching of the early church could attach itself.⁸⁵

It must have seemed acceptable for Jews in Palestine to listen to theological arguments using Greek philosophical language derived from Plato because, after all, the Greek philosophers were disciples of Moses who had perhaps strayed a bit but were nonetheless acceptable so long as their theology and the Pentateuch could be read together and explained without conflict. The importance of the realization that the Greek philosophers were originally students of Moses, and that anything using their work needed to be listened to and scrutinized carefully cannot be overemphasized. The Jewish audience knew that the allegorical interpretation of their Scripture required analysis and criticism.

⁸³ J. Collins, *Between Athens*, 271.

⁸⁴ J. Collins, *Between Athens*, 271-72.

⁸⁵ Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1:169. The writings that Hengel is referring to include the *Letter of Aristeas*, the *Wisdom of Solomon*, and the remnant of *Pseudo-Phocylides*.

Accordingly, a teacher of Hellenistic Jewish philosophy who could relate it to Scripture was welcome within the Sabbath *synagōgē* in Galilee.

Galilee, the Crossroads of Culture?

The New Testament states that Jesus' home was in Galilee. There is little consensus of scholarship regarding the social setting and background of Jesus' environment there. As Jonathan Reed points out, some insist that Galilee was Israelite, others Gentile. Some "prove" it was conservative Jewish, others totally Hellenistic. Some say impoverished, others prosperous. Some say zealously nationalistic, others shrewdly acquiescent. Some say Semitic, others Greek-speaking and Hellenized. Reed concludes that in the past those who search for the "historical Jesus" simply colored in whatever setting suited their case.⁸⁶ There is some support for all of these scenarios. Galilee, being situated geographically between the center of the Seleucid Empire and the Mediterranean had seen armies come into, fight, and exit, leaving remnants of their cultures. This military activity of the Greek armies continued for a period of over one hundred years, to be followed by the Hasmonean conflicts with the Seleucids for another hundred years, and followed again by Roman conflicts. There was no possibility of isolation of the inhabitants of Galilee. There was no possibility that the language and customs of the Greeks was unknown to the average adult inhabitant, because this knowledge was critically necessary for their existence and survival.

⁸⁶ Jonathan L. Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-Examination of the Evidence* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2000), 8-9.

The fact that Galilee's principal resource was good land and adequate rainfall for agriculture gave support to the theory that it was peopled by peasant farmers. Certainly, peasant farmers lived and worked there. However, in the first century, because of Galilee's new major cities of Sepphoris and Tiberius that were built by Herod Antipas, it has been said that the area must have been strongly Greco-Roman. Over and above all, it has been concluded that Galilee in the first century was a syncretistic blend of the aforementioned cultures. Modern archaeology is currently narrowing down these possibilities. However, even archaeology can be subject to huge biases, as witnessed in the past, because most sites were excavated for the single explicit purpose of searching for correlation with the site's biblical past, to "confirm" the truth of the Bible. This search for "truth" invariably ignored or destroyed contrary "Hellenistic" evidence.⁸⁷

The excavations at Sepphoris, Herod Antipas' first capital in Galilee, are of extremely high interest because this was a Hellenized city situated in a militarily advantageous location, high on a hill with a view extending from the Mediterranean all the way to the Sea of Galilee. Sepphoris is only five kilometers from Jesus' hometown of Nazareth. The fact that it is not mentioned in the New Testament should not be of concern, for only a few Galilean cities and towns are named, and most are not.⁸⁸ Jewish people must have assembled somewhere on

⁸⁷ Reed, *Archaeology*, 17-18.

⁸⁸ Reed, *Archaeology*, 133.

the Sabbath there in a *synagōgē* assembly of some sort, and if Jesus preached in all *synagōgēs* in Galilee, then he must have known Sepphoris. Furthermore, it is untenable that a preacher so well traveled as Jesus would not have known a city that was an hour away on foot.

Because Sepphoris is located on a major east-west road between the seaport of Ptolemais and the other major Hellenized city, Tiberias, it is often conjectured that Sepphoris was a major crossroad of the Levant, whereby trade activity resulted in a dynamic and diversified populace open to hear about, and often join up with, any new culture or philosophy. Reed has shown that prior claims about Sepphoris being at a major crossroad have been overstated. The road through Sepphoris was not a major trade route, and was not a paved Roman road in the time of Jesus.⁸⁹ Nor was there a north-south road through Sepphoris leading to Jerusalem. In order to travel to Jerusalem, the east-west road was taken east to Capernaum, whereupon the road along the Jordan River was taken south. It is wrong to think that Sepphoris was culturally diverse simply because it was on a major crossroads. It was not on a major crossroad, and the population may not have been particularly diverse. It was important because of its militarily strategic location, its Greco-Roman government, and the fact that it was a beautiful and attractive city, as Josephus says, the “ornament of all Galilee.”⁹⁰ For Roman and Jew alike, it was likely a nice place to live.

⁸⁹ Reed, *Archaeology*, 117, 147.

⁹⁰ *Ant.* 18.27.

Sepphoris had a significant Jewish population, and modern excavations show many indications of it having been a Hellenized city constructed by Romans on a Greek city plan. Modern archaeological scholars such as Eric Meyers has tentatively concluded that the social setting of Sepphoris was that of an "essentially Jewish population, which consisted of a relatively large priestly component according to some literary clues, selectively adopted aspects of Hellenism, as Antipas introduced Roman architectural styles."⁹¹ James F. Strange says that it was a Roman architectural "urban overlay" that was grafted onto a Jewish base, to result in a blend that both symbolized Roman power and accommodated Jewish sensibilities. However, two extreme social settings must be abandoned, says Strange. The first one to be rejected is that Sepphoris and its environs were indicative of a simple rural atmosphere. The second that must be abandoned is the notion of antagonism between Jew and Roman; Strange says that their relationship, although complex, was not antagonistic.⁹² Even so, as Richard Horsley argues, Greek philosophical schools would likely not have been popular in Sepphoris.

As at Tiberias, the administrative elite at Sepphoris who may have acquired a modicum of cosmopolitan culture were not likely to have been more than a small percentage of the populace. Given the lack of literary as well as archaeological evidence for the early first

⁹¹ Reed, *Archaeology*, 110. Reed is quoting from Eric Meyers, "Roman Sepphoris in the Light of New Archaeological Evidence and Research," in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (ed. Lee Levine; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1992), 321-38.

⁹² Reed, *Archaeology*, 111. Reed is using the work of James F. Strange, "Some Implications of Archaeology for New Testament Studies," in *What has Archaeology to Do with Faith?* (ed. James Charlesworth and Walter Weaver; Philadelphia: Trinity, 1992), 23-59.

century we can only speculate whether through or underneath that elite there were carriers of cosmopolitan culture in the city.⁹³

It can be concluded that Sepphoris, the capital city of Galilee, which Reed says had a population in the early first century of between 8000 and 12,000, consisted of both Greco-Roman and Jewish people, likely many more of the latter. Because these people lived together in peace, it can be concluded that the Jewish population was significantly Hellenized.⁹⁴ It was a situation of a large Jewish population in a city that also housed a Roman government that, judging from the architecture, was inclined to Greek culture.⁹⁵ If the question is asked as to how these two groups got along peacefully, the answer must consider the motive and practice of Jewish apologetics. In order for peace to be effected between two groups, it is necessary that the two respect one another. In fact, the mixed population so loved peace that when the Jewish revolt began, the Hellenized Jews of Sepphoris simply opted out of fighting, and welcomed the

⁹³ Horsley, *Archaeology, History, and Society*, 59.

⁹⁴ Reed, *Archaeology*, 101. See also *J.W.*, 3.31. Coins minted in Sepphoris in A.D. 67 bear the legend "City of Peace."

⁹⁵ Richard A. Batey, *Jesus and the Forgotten City: New Light on Sepphoris and the Urban World of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 53, states that Antipas established Sepphoris as "the nerve center for the government's control of Galilee and Peraea. Political policy, military strategy, economic regulations, and cultural affairs will be administered from this seat of power."

E. P. Sanders, "Jesus' Relation to Sepphoris," in *Sepphoris in Galilee: Crosscurrents of Culture* (ed. Rebecca Martin Nagy et al.; Raleigh: North Carolina Museum of Art. dist. by Eisenbrauns, 1996), 76, presents a radically alternate view. Sanders says that prior views of Sepphoris as an example of an urban, Hellenized Roman cultural center rest on the basic mistake that the Roman officials and bureaucrats stationed there by Gabinius in 57 B.C. were Romans (*J.W.* 1.8.5). They were Jewish, says Sanders, and so Jews governed Jews and the pagan influence on Sepphoris has been exaggerated.

Roman army.⁹⁶ How did the Greco-Roman occupants learn to respect the Jews, and vice-versa? The Jews must have been able to defend themselves intellectually against the Greco-Roman arrogance and claims for superiority of philosophy and culture. Philo's description of the *synagōgē* activity of preparing each and every Jew to defend intellectually his or her ancestral philosophy, using allegorized Scripture to exemplify Platonic philosophy as necessary, must have been one of the keys to keep peace in this city. It must be conjectured herein that apologetics that were taught in the *synagōgēs* in the Diaspora, especially Alexandria, were welcome and subsequently popular in Galilee. Along with these apologetics come the philosophical allegories of the Pentateuch, and their attendant Platonic doctrine. For Hellenized Jews in Galilee, the theology inherent within Platonic philosophy, as brought out of the Pentateuch by the allegorical method of interpretation, was taught in *synagōgēs*.

⁹⁶ J.W. 2.68-69.

CHAPTER 5

THE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

The Message of Jesus

It is only after understanding the theology of Hellenistic Judaism, as exemplified by the lectures and books of Philo, that, in turn, are heavily influenced by Platonic and Pythagorean philosophy, that a person can appreciate the message of Jesus. This message is Jesus' gospel as taught in Galilean *synagōgēs* that consists of the statements concerning the Kingdom of God that were discussed in Chapter One. Jesus' gospel was presented in the form of parables. The parables are the bedrock of the Jesus tradition. Most New Testament scholars consider them as authentic today.¹ As Joachim Jeremias said, "The student of the parables of Jesus, as they have been transmitted to us in the first three Gospels, may be confident that he stands upon a particularly firm historical foundation. The parables are a fragment of the original rock of tradition."² C. H. Dodd also stated the situation accurately.

The parables are perhaps the most characteristic element in the teaching of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Gospels. They have

¹Robert W. Funk, Bernard Brandon Scott, and James R. Butts, *The Parables of Jesus: Red Letter Edition: A Report of the Jesus Seminar* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1988), 26-27. Even the highly critical Jesus Seminar finds five parables out of thirty-three that Jesus undoubtedly said, fifteen that Jesus probably said, six that have been modified but reflect Jesus' ideas, and six that he did not say. Of the six that the Jesus Seminar said Jesus did not say, only one, **The Fishnet**, is included in the following discussion.

² Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 11. Jeremias, however, provides an eschatological interpretation of many of the parables.

upon them, taken as a whole, the stamp of a highly individual mind, in spite of the re-handling they have inevitably suffered in the course of transmission. Their appeal to the imagination fixed them in the memory, and gave them a secure place in the tradition. Certainly there is no part of the gospel record which has for the reader a clearer ring of authenticity.

But the interpretation of the parables is another matter. Here there is no general agreement. In the traditional teaching of the Church for centuries they were treated as allegories, in which each term stood as a cryptogram for an idea, so that the whole had to be decoded term by term.³

John Dominic Crossan thinks that the parables of Jesus can be interpreted in thirteen different ways, with at least four levels of meaning.⁴ However, it cannot be that Jesus' original message had a plethora of meanings, although some degree of ambiguity must be allowed. It also cannot be that allegory can run wild in Jesus' parables. When Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of God, the subject cannot be about his ministry, or the Church, or the later invention of Christianity. Terms such as the Kingdom of God, the Word, and the soul, had to have been known and recognized by those in the audience to whom Jesus' message is addressed. Jesus thus assumed a *koine* theology that generally defined these terms, in order for his message to have been even roughly understood. As has been shown, this *koine* theology had been inherited from Platonism during the Hellenistic era, had been integrated with Jewish thought in Hellenistic Judaism circles, brought to a peak of development by Alexandrian scholars and lecturers such as Philo, spread throughout Palestine,

³ Dodd, *Parables of the Kingdom*, 1.

⁴ Crossan, *In Parables*, vii, 1.

especially Galilee, and discussed in local *synagōgēs*. The stage had been set for Jesus' message to be heard by those exposed to this *koine* theology.

This *koine* theology would have been common, perhaps, only to those Jews who attended those hypothetical *synagōgēs* that regularly discussed ancestral Jewish and Hellenistic philosophy. Because Jesus was said to preach in all *synagōgēs* in Galilee, it can be surmised that it was a regular Sabbath event that welcomed interesting visiting speakers and discussed both the literal and allegorical interpretations and the theology involved.

Jesus was welcome to teach in any *synagōgē* in Galilee. Yet, Jesus' personal mission was to teach *only* the lost sheep of Israel.⁵ This could mean that the Galilean Jews who attended *synagōgēs* were considered to be non-traditional Jews, and more specifically, were highly Hellenized Jews.⁶ If Jesus taught the *lost sheep* of Israel in Galilean *synagōgēs*, then in what sense were these pious Jews *lost*, other than being Hellenized? If these Galilean Jews were thoroughgoing law-breakers, then what were they doing attending lectures in *synagōgēs*? The fact that they attended these meetings says that the *lost sheep* of Israel can be neither flagrant law-breaking Jews, nor Gentiles; they were Jews that did not literally follow all aspects of the Jewish law. It is speculated herein

⁵ Matt 10:6, 15:24. Ben Witherington, in *The Christology of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 124-26, argues that these verses are authentic to Jesus and were not later added to reflect early Palestinian Christian missionary preaching. His conclusion that the *lost sheep* applies to all of Israel, however, is overreaching.

⁶ The term 'highly Hellenized' is necessary since Hengel has shown that all of Palestine and the Diaspora was Hellenized to some extent. See Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, 1:1-3, 311. The extremes, recognizing a full range of gradient in between, thus become 'traditional Judaism' and 'highly Hellenized Judaism,' with the latter seeming as *lost sheep* to the former.

that Jesus' Hellenized message of the Kingdom of God was greatly appreciated by his Hellenized Jewish audience, the *lost sheep* of Israel, who were particularly interested in Jesus' message that practicing the cardinal virtues was the way to salvation, and was every bit as valid as the adherence to Jewish law.⁷

If the *synagōgē* practices in Galilee were anything like those in Alexandria as discussed by Philo; that is, extensive discussion of allegorized Scripture as being Greek philosophy, with emphasis on the equivalency of Platonic virtue and Jewish law, then the *koine* philosophy was actually spread via the *synagōgēs*. It is indeed speculative to assert that the Galileans met regularly on the Sabbath to discuss Greek philosophy and allegorization of Scripture. The evidence offered rests on three facts: (1) The gospel of the Kingdom of God as taught by Jesus can be understood as an exhortation to practice the Platonic cardinal virtues as a means of salvation; this message was also taught by others in Alexandria. (2) The method of this teaching in Alexandria used non-literal metaphors to relate Jewish law to Platonic philosophy; Jesus also used non-literal metaphor, parable, and allegory to teach this message. Finally, (3) Jewish allegorists taught in the *synagōgēs* throughout and beyond Alexandria on the Sabbath; Jesus taught allegory and parable throughout Galilee on the Sabbath, in *synagōgēs*, *whatever they were*.

⁷ The crowds that followed Jesus did not follow the Jewish law, according to John 7:49. It is important to realize that Jesus did not preach against the law, but only against certain literal interpretations of it that he allegorized. See Matt 5:17, "I have come not to abolish but to fulfill."

The practice of the theological formula for individual salvation associated with Hellenistic Judaism has been thoroughly discussed, from its Platonic/Pythagorean roots through its modification by Alexandrian scholars such as Philo. It can be seen to involve four basic steps corresponding to the four salvific virtues emphasized by Plato.⁸ These four virtues were later called the cardinal virtues: sobriety, courage, wisdom, and justice. The first step is the acquiring of sobriety, which requires **repentance**, or turning of the mind – a literal *metanoia* – from obsession with material things and bodily passions toward concern with the soul's health.⁹ The second requires the steadfast courage needed for a continued **commitment** toward a way of life that pursues the growth of the human soul; this is the life of a lover of wisdom.¹⁰ The third is the phase of the pursuit of wisdom itself, the **growth** of the soul by the nourishment associated with the learning of divine knowledge.¹¹ The fourth step of the ladder is the **amazement** of experiencing the reward of God's justice, especially the

⁸ Lactantius, in *Epit.* (ANF 5.50), the "Christian Cicero," a late 3rd century Church father, recognized this, saying, "Since therefore Christ was sent to man as a teacher of virtue, for the perfection of his teaching it was plainly befitting that he should act as well as teach."

These four virtues are given in *Resp.* 427E. There are other places that Plato describes the virtues in different terms; however, sobriety and courage are always included. High-mindedness (*megaloprepeias*) is sometimes used for wisdom; e.g., *Resp.* 402C, 536A.

⁹ In Plato's terms, this is the virtue of sobriety (*sōphrōn*), wherein the soul must get control over the passions by turning away from the desires. For an extensive discussion of repentance, see Philo, *Virt.* 175-86, "Conversion from sin to a blameless life shows a man of wisdom who has not been utterly ignorant of what is for his good" (177) (Colson, LCL).

¹⁰ This exemplifies the Platonic virtue of courage (*andreia*), or persistence under adverse conditions such as overcoming the temptation to quit.

¹¹ This growth is meant to achieve the virtue of wisdom (*sophē*), as Plato repeatedly says.

experience of a *sudden*, fleeting glimpse of God while the body is yet alive. This sight of God may come as through a mirror (*esoptron*), dimly, as it did for Philo and Paul, or perhaps through a corybantic frenzy, as experienced by Philo over one thousand times, or perhaps as through a mist as described by Cicero.¹² When the latter stage is experienced, the soul is ready for its final journey home, even if death of the body is a long time away. The soul that has been trained and successfully tested, has seen a glimpse of heaven, and has become a citizen of the Kingdom of God, is then welcome to return home.¹³ This order seems to fit best Jesus' gospel of the Kingdom of God, which describes a process of four steps, commencing with repentance. With Jesus, when addressing the crowds, the commitment comes early, before growth begins. Jesus may have chosen this order in recognition of John the Baptist's insistence that repentance and commitment, via baptism, must come first, at least for the crowds. However, the Parable of the Closed Door describes a confirming commitment that is made *after* purification by the pursuit of wisdom; that is: growth, commitment, more growth, and reward. This method is suitable for disciples.

¹² 1 Cor 13:12; *Migr.* 34-35; *Decal.* 105; *De Fin.* 5.15.43. God determines if, when, and where this gift is given, which implies a divine judgment. Lactantius (*Inst.* 3.22) reminds us that Aristotle knew justice to be the mother of all virtues. That is, the reward of God's justice is why the other, enabling, virtues are pursued.

Clement of Alexandria, in *Strom.* 5.1, ties Paul's expression of dim vision to the view of the divine expressed in Ps.-Plato's *Epinomis* [likely 986D and 991E-992A]. Clement explains that this vision was previously given but to few, but now, thanks to the teacher of divine knowledge (Jesus), is made possible for anyone to experience.

¹³ This is God's justice (*dikaia*), the final reward, which, to be achieved, must first be practiced as human justice.

Philo helps greatly in the understanding of the two methods. Philo differentiated three ways of learning divine knowledge, associated with three types of student. The first was that of Abraham, which is education and growth by being taught.¹⁴ This is the way that was popular to the students known to Philo. The second way is that of Isaac, who required no teacher, being self-taught. This type of person obtains divine knowledge without help from a teacher.¹⁵ The third way is that of Jacob, who learned the practice of virtue through a life-long wrestling with his passions, until, finally, the contest was won.¹⁶ The teaching method associated with Abraham is that of a disciple; the method associated with Jacob is that of someone too unruly to begin as a disciple, who must first get the passions under control, and who might be greatly aided by baptism.

Accordingly, Philo advocates a slightly different arrangement involving these four steps within a pattern of three contests. The first contest, for Philo, is a contest of hope for God's justice, which drives the above **growth** of the soul by development through the study of wisdom. The second is the contest of **commitment** and **repentance**. The third is continued **growth** leading to the just reward of the soul's endeavors, or the **amazement**.¹⁷

¹⁴ *Congr.* 24, 35, 73-74.

¹⁵ *Congr.* 36.

¹⁶ *Ebr.* 82; *Congr.* 35; *Migr.* 200.

¹⁷ The three contests are described in *Praem.* 11-31. Clement of Alexandria, in *Strom.* 2.9 said that amazement is the beginning of true wisdom.

Exegesis of the Parables of the Kingdom of God

For the following exegesis, attention will be paid to the advice of Adolf Jülicher, who said that (1) allegory is to be minimized, (2) the parables should have a single point, and (3) the single point is a moral or ethical one.¹⁸ What will not be utilized is Jülicher's advice to interpret the parables with the broadest possible application, because this quickly drives the interpretation into banality. The application of the Kingdom of God parables is narrow and specific, not broad and general.

Jülicher's advice greatly simplifies the interpretation. He says to look for a single, simple meaning. The meaning should be able to be appreciated by a group of disciples, or a crowd of potential disciples.¹⁹ In this thesis, the key is to understand the parables in terms of the intelligible world of the Kingdom of God as developed by Plato and modified by Philo. In this light, the meanings of the parables are readily recognized without need for critical word searches, accusation of tampering, or any sort of hairsplitting. It matters a little which of the parallel versions are used, but even this variance is not paramount, for the basic meaning of the gospel of the Kingdom of God has been preserved by the authors of the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke, John, and Thomas.

¹⁸ Adolf Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu* (2 vols.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1888-1899)

¹⁹ Jülicher advises the treatment of the parable as an elaboration of a metaphor. The idea that a metaphor compares a single aspect of one thing to another is traceable back to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* 2.20-22.

The exegesis herein is unique to New Testament parable scholarship because it is based on a tradition of theology tracing back through Middle Platonists to Plato, and likely to Pythagoras. In several cases, the conclusions of the parable exegesis are similar to that of others who use entirely different criteria and presuppositions, such as theological concepts implied in the Old Testament. Nevertheless, a detailed comparison with the results of the other quite different approaches has little meaning other than coincidence and need not be done here. In the following exegesis, the Gospel of Matthew is used except where the parables only exist in other Gospels.²⁰

Parables of Repentance and Purification

1. **The Rich Farmer.** (Luke 12:16-23//*Gos. Thom.* 63). Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God." He said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing."

Jesus reminded the Hellenistic Jews that they had a divine element – the soul – within them. The very first step toward salvation involves knowing yourself,

²⁰ Of the 25 parables discussed, 19 are in Matt, 13 are in Luke, 8 in Mark, 1 in John, 13 in Thomas, 10 in Q, and 7 in Mark-Q overlap.

and that the soul within is a “kind of consecrated image of God.”²¹ The soul is a part of the divine world, and accumulation of wealth in the sensual, material world does not in any way aid the soul, and in fact will inflict delusion that prevents a person from following the stairway to heaven. What should be stored up is the food of divine wisdom. The **Rich Farmer** is a parable illustrating this single, simple, point. Literally every Greek philosopher warned against the corruption of wealth. Hellenistic Jewish texts continued this theme.²²

The exegesis of others is widely varied and tends to avoid any discussion of the soul. Joachim Jeremias essentially ignores Jülicher’s advice, saying that “it is necessary to avoid a too obvious conclusion,” and claiming that what Jesus is really thinking about is the approaching eschatological event, with images of the jackal who feeds on corpses, the great hour of temptation, the evil one, the destruction of the Temple, the unspeakable calamity and the Judgment of God.²³ Brad Young agrees that Jeremias greatly overemphasized the apocalyptic, saying that the parable is about the fear of death and the need for preparation for the judgment after death. Young recognizes the soul as that which is to be

²¹ Cicero, *Leg.* 1.22.58-59.

²² E.g., 1 Enoch 97:8-10; Sir 11:18-19.

²³ Jeremias, *Parables*, 166-67. Jeremias’ exegesis has served as a standard for decades of what Dodd calls the “eschatological line” of interpretation. The logic of this approach is based on a reasonable premise that an apocalyptic crisis will demand a call to repentance, but is followed by an illogical conclusion that each and every call to repentance is in the face of this crisis (see esp. 160). To proponents of this line, *metanoia* becomes a term of the apocalyptic. It is very rare that references to Platonic conversion are found in the works of these exegetes.

judged after death, without mention of an afterlife.²⁴ Norman Perrin says that this is a "parable of decision," in the face of a coming eschatological catastrophe, which is "the nearest approach in the teaching of Jesus to the cosmic End of apocalyptic."²⁵ Perrin does advise, however, against reading more details into it than are apparent. Arland Hultgren notes the similarity, in part, to Sirach 11:18-19, and offers the simple exegesis that the parable is an example of why a person should avoid living as an atheist.²⁶ As is typical for *all* parables in this section, *no one* mentions *anything* concerning Greek philosophy as a basis.

2. **The Children of the Kingdom.** (Matt 18:2-10//Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48; John 3:3, 5; 13:20; *Gos. Thom.* 22). He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes! If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is better

²⁴ Brad H. Young, *The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998), 279. Young's book represents a refreshing look of what might seem as an argument against this thesis; that is, that the parables of Jesus are overwhelmingly Jewish. Young's approach, however, is to show strong parallels between the parables and rabbinical literature, and to argue for a common source. In general, his arguments are accepted here because they greatly support a *koine* Platonic philosophy used by both Jesus and the rabbis; this is because the Hellenistic influence on rabbinical literature is large and obvious.

²⁵ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 80, 189.

²⁶ Hultgren, *Parables*, 108.

for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell of fire.²⁷ Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven.”

This pericope is not usually considered to be a parable. However, the stated metaphor sets up an important criterion for entry into the Kingdom of God and appears in five traditions. Again, literally every Greek philosopher, especially Plato, taught the virtue of sobriety, which is temperance or moderation, sometimes even abstinence, from passions, lusts, vices, and addictions, all being serious impediments to the learning of divine knowledge. Principal among all addictions is sexual lust. Young children do not demonstrate sexual lust.²⁸ The single, simple point in this metaphor about entrance to the Kingdom of God is that sexual lust must be curtailed, if not eliminated entirely.²⁹ A disciple's sexual appetite must be that of a child's: virtually nonexistent. Certainly, the eye that seeks to view sexual objects can be a culprit. Any sort of sexual stimulation must be avoided.

²⁷ See *Somn.* 2.68, where Philo said to cut off the hand that touches the genitals. Plato, in *Symp.* 205E, said “For men are prepared to have their own feet and hands cut off if they feel these belongings to be harmful.” In regard to lust, it might be necessary for men to make themselves eunuchs for the sake of entering the Kingdom of God (Matt 19:12). These ideas of Jesus’ are Greek, not Jewish, because traditional Jewish law forbade any form of self-mutilation.

²⁸ Plato did not mention any notion of what the later Christians would call original sin. To Plato, as with Jesus, infants and children were naturally innocent. Plato considered that the innocent soul requires proper care even prior to birth. See *Leg.* 790C-793E.

²⁹ See parallels in *Gos. Thom.* sayings 22 and 114. In antiquity, the female was seen as the sexual aggressor, as is the case observed in many animals, with the male simply reacting to the overtures of the female. This unfortunate and erroneous view persists today in some cultures. Thus, to “make female male” is to eliminate sexual desire.

The exegesis of others is sparse because it this pericope is not generally considered as a parable. Richard France, however, claims the general notion that "children" is to be taken as "a model of true discipleship."³⁰ Jeremias says that to become humble is to "confess guilt," or possibly only to acknowledge God as "Abba."³¹ Perrin sees it as a call to be humble (*tapeinoō*) without explaining what that might entail for a child, and a "reversal of values."³² Hultgren says the parable refers to "caring for the 'little ones' and not causing them to sin," without mention of what sins are meant here.³³

- 3. The Rich Person's Difficulties.** (Matt 19:23-24//Mark 10:23-25; Luke 18:24-25; *Gos. Thom.* 81). Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

This pericope is a metaphor, not usually considered to be a parable, and is found in four traditions. The message, as any Greek philosopher could attest, is that the second major impediment to the seeking of wisdom, after sexual lust, is greed and the pursuit of accumulated wealth.³⁴ Without question, a person's focus on acquiring wealth and the worries associated with its possible loss are

³⁰ Richard T. France, "On Being Ready," in *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables* (ed. Richard N. Longenecker; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 192.

³¹ Jeremias, *Parables*, 190-91.

³² Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 183, 188.

³³ Hultgren, *Parables*, 54.

³⁴ Plato, *Leg.* 743A, "If a man is superlatively good, it is impossible that he should be superlatively rich" (Bury, LCL).

totally antithetical to the accumulation of wisdom and divine knowledge. This is a simple comparison illustrating that point.

The exegesis of others either ignores this pericope or, like Perrin, yields to the early 20th century work exegesis of Hans Windisch who tried to relate the conditions for entry into the Kingdom of God to the entry conditions into the Temple as spelled out in Deuteronomy 4:1; 6:17f; 16:20, saying that this is the final state of the redeemed, hence apocalyptic.³⁵ Dodd simply says that 'Jesus is represented as calling for volunteers to join a cause.'³⁶ Hultgren says the parable concerns discipleship and commitment to the kingdom, but does not elaborate.³⁷

4. **The Wedding Banquet.** (Matt 22:1-14//Luke 14:16-24; Gos. Thom. 64). Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.' But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in

³⁵ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 183-84.

³⁶ Dodd, *Parables*, 86.

³⁷ Hultgren, *Parables*, 421.

here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen.

When called to the study of wisdom, most people have excuses for opting out. The parable of the Wedding Banquet summarizes the most common list of excuses for not participating in the Kingdom of God. In Matthew is mentioned a person who considered his possession of land to be more important than the Kingdom of God. Another thought his business more important. The souls of these persons were lost. Only people who did not have these material addictions were invited to participate in the Kingdom of God. Note the second message about being prepared for the banquet in the Matthean version; if Jülicher was correct in saying that an authentic parable can only address a single point, then this part was added to the original parable. The parallels to this parable in Luke 14:16-24 and *Gospel of Thomas* 64 are likely closer to being authentic because they make only one single point, not two as in the Matthew account.

Luke's version names the three excuses to be worry or obsession over land ownership, equipment (animal) ownership, or marriage. The *Gospel of Thomas* lists four excuses as business/merchandising, home ownership, commitment to a friend, and ownership of a farm. All of these excuses represent conflicts with a commitment to the Kingdom of God. Jesus is not necessarily saying that it is wrong to own a farm, etc., but only that it is wrong to choose the accumulation of material possessions over the growth of the divine soul. Note

that in Luke, commitment to a marriage instead of to the Kingdom of God is wrong; that is, concern about a spouse is not more important than the salvation of one's soul. This is a hard lesson from Jesus: family and friends are not more important than the pursuit of divine knowledge.

The exegesis of others is extensive and varied. Jeremias focuses on the latter part of Matthew's parable, that concerning the garment, which he says is the "white robe" that is eschatological clothing, the clean garment of forgiveness and imputed righteousness.³⁸ Perrin says that the parable is about Jesus' expectation of table fellowship in the eschatological community.³⁹ Dodd says that the parable is not authentic to Jesus, but shows the Church influence is differentiating those invited – the Jews – from those who were let in uninvited; that is, the Gentiles.⁴⁰ PHEME PERKINS thinks that Matthew added the garment pericope as a tragic warning about divine judgment that was overly harsh toward the Jews. She thinks the original meaning was that the door is still open for reconciliation between those originally invited – the Jews – with God.⁴¹ Young agrees that the added Matthew pericope sets off the Jews and does injustice to Jesus in doing so. He notes a few Talmud parallels about the basic banquet theme, and concludes that only the excuse of recent marriage is valid under Jewish practices. He says it is key to understand that the master's high aim was

³⁸ Jeremias, *Parables*, 189.

³⁹ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 80.

⁴⁰ Dodd, *Parables*, 93-94.

⁴¹ PHEME PERKINS, *Hearing the Parables of Jesus* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 94-98.

to fill his house, but the basic message was that all are invited and that all are in danger of missing the Kingdom because of other interest, which is in agreement with the above exegesis based on philosophical arguments.⁴²

John Dominic Crossan says that Matthew's parable has been emended considerably and considers the Gospel of Thomas verse to be authentic because it contains no allegorization. His conclusion is agreeable, "It is a warning not to let material cares distract one from the invitation to true gnosis."⁴³

5. **The Unmerciful Servant.** (Matt 18:23-35). "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay me what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him. 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you? And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'"

⁴² Young, *Parables*, 175-86.

⁴³ Crossan, *In Parables*, 69-72.

The wicked servant was in astronomical debt, literally millions of dollars. He was the antithesis of a rich person, because of this immense debt. Yet, he was obsessed with money, demanding the equivalent of a few hundred dollars from a fellow slave, without mercy. The hearer of the parable is told to consider the debt that each person has to God, who gave him or her a soul so precious that it is priceless. The soul is on loan from God. The immense value of the soul is contrasted to a small monetary debt that is insignificant and should be forgiven. If a person contemplates the immense value of his or her soul, they will surely not worry about the minor things, and all else is minor.⁴⁴ One of the detractors to the seeking of wisdom is the worry that an outstanding monetary debt will not be paid. The parable is about the priority and value of the divine soul over material goods, in particular, the worry over money.

The exegesis of others is varied. Jeremias says the parable is about the Last Judgment, teaching that a person must share God's forgiveness of their sins with others.⁴⁵ Perrin adds that this ethical teaching presupposes the Kingdom of God as present in Jesus' ministry but future for all others until men learn to forgive this way, "to move toward consummation."⁴⁶ Perkins says it is a simple example of the command to love your neighbor.⁴⁷ Crossan says that this parable

⁴⁴ This is entirely consistent with Jesus' putting of things into perspective by his examples of the birds and lilies of Matt 6:25-34 and Luke 12:22-32.

⁴⁵ Jeremias, *Parables*, 213.

⁴⁶ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 202-03.

⁴⁷ Perkins, *Hearing the Parables*, 123.

is unified without any signs of tampering, but it is not so much about the master's mercy as it is about the "servant's lack and sheer stupidity of displaying his lack in such a way at such a time."⁴⁸ Young points out that imprisonment to satisfy debt is contrary to Jewish law according to Amos 2:6, 8:6 and 2 Kings 4:1. The point, says Young, is that God demands full accountability and God's mercy is not given to those who do not forgive others. It is important for us to realize that each of us has a colossal debt to God,⁴⁹ a point with which Plato would agree.

6. **The Leaky Jar.** (*Gospel of Thomas* 97).⁵⁰ Jesus said, "The [father's] kingdom is like a woman who was carrying a [jar] full of meal. While she was walking along [a] distant road, the handle of the jar broke and the meal spilled behind her [along] the road. She did not know it; she had not noticed a problem. When she reached her house, she put the jar down and discovered that it was empty."

Entering the Kingdom of God is about the accumulation of divine knowledge. But the human mind is more like a broken, leaky jar than a sealed container, and more like a sieve than a jar.⁵¹ The teachings of Plato and Philo say that the human soul came from heaven and had possession of all divine

⁴⁸ Crossan, *In Parables*, 104.

⁴⁹ Young, *Parables*, 119-29.

⁵⁰ The Kingdom of God sayings in the Gospel of Thomas have been examined by Karen King, in "Kingdom in the Gospel of Thomas," *Forum* 3 (1987), 48-97, in light of social formation, similar to the method used by Burton Mack. Again, by presupposing that the original Jesus sayings are non-apocalyptic and non-eschatological (52), and that the Kingdom implies a later social formation by apocalyptic-minded early Christians, then virtually none of the twenty-two kingdom sayings are judged as authentic. To the contrary, it is shown in this thesis that by considering that the Kingdom of God represents an individual's philosophical status of virtue and wisdom that need not imply an associated closed community, if accepted, reverses most if not all of the aforementioned decision against authenticity of these sayings.

⁵¹ Plato used a sieve and a leaky jar (*Gorg.* 493A) for this analogy. In *Fug.* 200-01, Philo said a broken, leaky, cistern that leaks knowledge is analogous to an ill conditioned soul. In *QG* 4.104 and *Post.* 138, 146, Philo equates wisdom to a jar of water carried by a woman.

knowledge at that time. The soul's life in the human body, however, is subject to passions, vices and addictions that make very difficult the recollection of our divine origin. At birth we forgot everything, including from where we came, why we are here, and to where we should return. The leaky meal is representative of the loss, by those who are ignorant and lacking virtue, of what little divine knowledge had been originally retained. Furthermore, when the soul is in the material world – a place distant from its true home – it tends to lose the knowledge that it originally had. The message is about the need to replenish this divine knowledge by the pursuit of wisdom. With the accumulation of wisdom, however, we can recollect some of what we forgot at birth.

The exegesis of the aforementioned scholars is nil for this parable, except for Hultgren, who thinks that it has Gnostic meaning, that “loss of the kingdom from within – loss of the knowledge of one's origin and identity – is to lose salvation.”⁵² This is accurate for Plato, Philo and Jesus as well, and certainly is not unique to Gnosticism.

Parables of Commitment and Turning of the Mind

7. **The Two Sons.** (Matt 21:28-32). “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not;’ but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second son and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir;’ but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of

⁵² Hultgren, *Parables*, 443.

God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

This parable says something very important about the ministry of Jesus and the process of salvation through entry into the Kingdom of God. John's baptizing required a commitment from the participant. This commitment involved an immediate abandonment of the human pursuit of worldly goods and pleasures. This repentance is a true turning away from the old pursuits, never to look back once the hand is on the plough.⁵³ Those who do not turn are to be left behind as dead.⁵⁴

Jesus' teaching came after the baptismal commitment and required a lot of subsequent work in the pursuit of wisdom. This persistence to the commitment Plato would call courage. Both the commitment and the courage to carry out the labor are necessary. The tax collectors and prostitutes did both. They made the commitment to John, and followed Jesus as he taught divine wisdom. The chief priests of the temple whom Jesus is addressing neither committed to John nor followed Jesus as a teacher. The correct answer to Jesus' question is that neither son did the will of the father, for both commitment and labor are necessary. Even so, either son is likely better off than the chief priests and

⁵³ Luke 9:61-62.

⁵⁴ Matt 8:21-22; Luke 9:59-60. See also Geza Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism* (London: SCM, 1983; repr., Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 51. See also Philo, *Virt.* 181, "For it is excellent and profitable to *desert without a backward glance* [emphasis mine] to the ranks of virtue and abandon vice that malignant mistress" (Colson, LCL).

elders, who did nothing.⁵⁵ Granted, the son who failed to commit but found the courage to perform the labor anyway is the better son, for he finally changed his mind and perhaps he should be acknowledged as having made a belated commitment, for what that might be worth. In any event, the tax collectors and the prostitutes, who are the most unlikely to be thought of as pious in conventional thinking, did all that was necessary to enter the Kingdom of God; they made the commitment to sobriety and had the courage to carry it through.

The exegesis of others tends to focus on other elements. Jeremias says the parable is about the Last Judgment, and that the second son changing his mind is inauthentic and foreign to what Jesus would have said.⁵⁶ Perrin argues that the parable is about the entry point of the Kingdom as a "turning point in the destiny of the individual;" that is, an existential decision. To Perrin, this entry point is to the eschaton.⁵⁷ Dodd says that the parable is simply a comment on the rejection of the word by the religious leaders and acceptance of the outcasts.⁵⁸ Young allows that "neither of the sons was completely righteous in his actions," however, because the first son finally obeyed, it shows that it is *never* too late to

⁵⁵ The making of a religious commitment but later holding back or failing to carry it through was shown as a cause for punishment by death in Acts 5:1-10.

⁵⁶ Jeremias, *Parables*, 80, 125.

⁵⁷ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 123.

⁵⁸ Dodd, *Parables*, 93.

make a decision and act upon it: this might seem reasonable except for the fact that sometimes it *is* too late to acquire divine knowledge.⁵⁹

8. **The Old and New Treasure.** (Matt 13:52). And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

This pericope establishes a dual heritage for the Kingdom of God. The Scribes in the Gospels are the people who copy Scripture and perhaps other texts, to publish scrolls that may be used by their employer or sold. Such a scribe might be expert in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, or some combination of them. The old treasure refers to the traditional Jewish religion that interpreted the Mosaic law literally and tried to follow it. The new treasure refers to the allegorical interpretation of Scripture to show consistency with Greek philosophy. The Kingdom of God of Jesus incorporates both traditional Judaism and Greek philosophy, following a line of thinking by Jewish apologists such as Philo.

The exegesis of others is sparse on this parable, and is not commented on by Jeremias, Perrin or Dodd. Young considers the old to be the "essence of Torah," and the new as a renewal and reapplication of it.⁶⁰ Hultgren says that Matthew is referring to Christian scribes as the new, which is doubtful.⁶¹ John

⁵⁹ Young, *Parables*, 137.

⁶⁰ Young, *Parables*, 29-32.

⁶¹ Hultgren, *Parables*, 370.

McKenzie states the traditional Christian interpretation, which says that the old is the Mosaic law and the new is the Gospel, the "fullness of law."⁶²

9. **The Lost Sheep.** (Matt18:12-14//Luke 15:4-7, *Gos. Thom.* 107). "What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost."

This is not identified as a Kingdom of God saying as such, but is nevertheless applicable. It describes the action of a shepherd that is unrealistic, for no competent herdsman would risk the entire flock for one sheep. The parallel in the *Gospel of Thomas* does not include the last verse quoted above but adds the important fact that the lost sheep was the largest. The lost sheep represents a potential disciple that has embraced Hellenistic Jewish philosophy and has left the flock of traditional Judaism. The one Hellenistic Jew who follows his or her ancestral philosophy is worth more than ninety-nine traditional Jews who do not. When a potential disciple with the right credentials is identified, the teacher must seek out and track him or her down. The rest of the mob is useless and can be left behind without concern. Socrates, Plato and Pythagoras often said that qualified disciples were very hard to find. Socrates would seek them out anywhere. Pythagoras, when he found a candidate for discipleship, would subject them to excruciating tests. It is the teacher's job to seek out and proselytize potential disciples. A good disciple is extremely valuable.

⁶² John L. McKenzie, "The Gospel According to Matthew," *JBC*, 88.

Philo had said that the person who repents from a sinful life and chooses to serve God by acquiring wisdom is worth more than an entire nation of people who do not, as a ship's pilot is worth more than all the crew and a general as much as all of his soldiers, based solely on their knowledge: "So, too, against the worth of a whole nation the wise man can hold his own, protected by the impregnable wall of godliness."⁶³

The exegesis of others tends to be elaborate because this parable is considered to address the mission of Jesus. All agree that Jesus' mission was to address the lost sheep. Jeremias ties the parable to the questions of the Pharisees in Luke 15:2, which he translates as "Why does he receive these sinners (into his house) and admit them to his table-fellowship?" He considers that Luke is addressing Jesus' opponents, while Matthew addresses Jesus' disciples, hence the reason for the variation. Jeremias says that Luke preserved the original parable, but Matthew's was a "secondary, wholly artificial composition." He says that the author of the *Gospel of Thomas* logion, for that matter, "completely misunderstood" the parable.⁶⁴ The simple point, Jeremias says, is that God rejoices over a repentant sinner. Perrin says little more, but thinks that the shepherd is the "distinctly eschatological figure" of Jesus.⁶⁵ Dodd says that one or both of the Matthean and Lukan versions are not original,

⁶³ *Virt.* 185-86.

⁶⁴ Jeremias, *Parables*, 38-40, 132-34.

⁶⁵ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 75.

because they are “too mechanical” in their allegorization.⁶⁶ Young concludes that the parable is meant to “challenge the listeners to seek the lost, bear the burden of restoration, and share the joy of finding the sinner with the community of faith.”⁶⁷ Hultgren offers an extensive analysis. He says it does not mean to say anything about the community, but only that it is the will of God that none perish, for “in the eyes of God, the loss of a single person is a tragedy.” He addresses the problem that the sheep is passive and the shepherd does all of the work, concluding that repentance is not just by demand, but by grace: “When the one in need of repentance is not taken by the throat but is set free in the safety and space that grace affords, repentance has come.” Hultgren has missed Jesus’ point that persons living in sin are generally passive and unable to repent all by their selves; they need to be rescued by a savior who tells them what to do and how to do it.

10. The Fishnet. (Matt 13:47-48//*Gos. Thom.8*). “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.”

This parable has a message similar to the prior one. The *Gospel of Thomas* adds that the only fish that was kept was the one fine large fish. The best fish was representative of the qualified disciple, as reinforced by Jesus

⁶⁶ Dodd, *Parables*, 91-92.

⁶⁷ Young, *Parables*, 198.

training Peter and Andrew to become “fishers of men;” that is, to become seekers of qualified disciples of the Kingdom of God.⁶⁸

The exegesis of others tends to become caught up in an eschatological net. Jeremias says that the parable is eschatological in character, representing the Last Judgment as between eatable and useless fish that are mixed and unable to be sorted out by human judgment. He says that God has fixed the moment of separation and we should have patience and trust in faith.⁶⁹ Perrin follows suit in saying that it is “clear beyond any shadow of a doubt that Jesus looked for such a future consummation.”⁷⁰ Dodd admits that this parable is an “allegory of last judgment,” that is “clearly secondary and may be ignored.” He considers the original meaning to address the “fishers of Men” in Mark 1:17, in that Jesus was selective in choosing his followers, which agrees with the above exegesis based on Greek philosophy.⁷¹ Robert Funk says that the parable is essentially inauthentic in that it “reflects the necessity of the young Christian movement to mark off its social boundaries from the larger world.”⁷² Hultgren

⁶⁸ Mark 1:17; Matt 4:19. See also *Plant.* 102, where growing the soul is related to fishing for big fish.

⁶⁹ Jeremias, *Parables*, 225-26.

⁷⁰ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 188.

⁷¹ Dodd, *Parables*, 85-87.

⁷² Funk, *Parables of Jesus*, 70.

cannot reconcile the approaches, saying that the parable provides a "bifocal message," of both the work of evangelization and the final judgment.⁷³

11. The Hidden Treasure. (Matt 13:44//Gos. Thom. 109). "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

On the surface, this parable describes unethical action similar to the modern term *insider trading*. However, this is a parable about commitment. When a person has decided to seek divine wisdom, it requires his or her top priority, if not undivided attention. Nothing else in the material world should matter at the time of the discovery of the treasure of the Kingdom of God. As Plato said: "And this is the chief reason why it should be our main concern that each of us, neglecting all other studies, should seek after and study this thing ... to learn of and discover the man who will give him the ability and the knowledge to distinguish the life that is good from that which is bad"⁷⁴ Vermes also said it well in regard to this parable: "When the truth is encountered, a choice has to be made, a decision, and it must be acted on immediately, whole-heartedly. And a price must be paid, one amounting to all that one has."⁷⁵ This decision requires sobriety and courage, both boldness and persistence to get what is necessary for salvation.

⁷³ Hultgren, *Parables*, 308.

⁷⁴ Resp. 618 B-C.

⁷⁵ Vermes, *Jesus and the World*, 52.

The exegesis of others approaches a consensus for this parable.

Jeremias says the focus is on the joy of the finder. He discounts the Gospel of

Thomas parallel, saying that it is penetrated by folklore and rabbinical stories.

The Matthean version is clear, says Jeremias.

With that great joy, surpassing all measure, seizes a man, it carries him away, penetrates his inmost being, subjugates his mind. All else seems valueless compared with that surpassing worth. No price is too great to pay. The unreserved surrender of what is most valuable becomes a matter of course. The decisive thing in the twin parable is not what the two men give up, but the reason for doing so; the overwhelming experience of the splendor of their discovery. Thus it is with the Kingdom of God.⁷⁶

Plato and Philo would agree with Jeremias' assessment of this joy.

Jeremias, however, in this disclosure, seems to have severely compromised his

theme that the Kingdom of God is yet to come. Perrin, in all consistency, views

this as a "parable of decision" in face of an impending but still future event, but

does not seem able to find anything apocalyptic here.⁷⁷ Dodd says the parable

depicts "great sacrifices for a worthy end," and a "call of Jesus to men to take

great risks with open eyes."⁷⁸ Young adds the fact that the Jewish tradition views

Torah learning as a great treasure, and that "accepting the kingdom meant

entering into obedience to God and searching the deeper meaning of his

revelation in Torah,"⁷⁹ which can be agreed with, providing that this deeper

⁷⁶ Jeremias, *Parables*, 32, 199-201.

⁷⁷ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 62, 74, 81.

⁷⁸ Dodd, *Parables*, 85-87.

⁷⁹ Young, *Parables*, 206-07.

meaning includes use of the allegorical method and relationship to the virtues of Greek philosophy. Crossan says the parable is about "a reversal of life," a conversion, a joyous surprise that overturns the past,⁸⁰ which is consistent with the above exegesis based on Greek Philosophy. Hultgren agrees that the parable is about joy, but adds the following twist.

According to this parable, the kingdom is something that one may well tumble upon rather than find by means of a search. Certainly the kingdom was hidden in the work and words of Jesus, not apparent to ordinary human perception. It was disclosed only to those whom God enlightened in and through the proclamation of Jesus. Here and there it became apparent only as a surprise.⁸¹

Plato and Philo would agree that the eventual reward of God's justice, the seeing of the divine, is up to God as to if, when and where it happens.

12. The Pearl of Great Value. (Matt 13:45-46//Gos. Thom. 76).
 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it."

The message of this parable is similar to the previous three. For those fortunate enough to realize the value of divine knowledge, there is nothing more important than to dedicate one's remaining life in its pursuit. The need for trading away all material possessions in order to obtain one immaterial possession of immortality appears in other Hellenistic Jewish and rabbinical literature.⁸² The

⁸⁰ Crossan, *In Parables*, 38, 53.

⁸¹ Hultgren, *Parables*, 415-16.

⁸² The parable has parallels in the *Testament of Job* 18:6-8 and the *Mekilta of R. Simon b. Jochai* 14.5. See also *Od.* 5.203-224, where Odysseus is willing to do the opposite, to trade

difference between this parable and its *twin*, The Hidden Treasure, is that here, the search is deliberately and diligently performed by a professional, and not stumbled over by accident. The twin parables thus describe two paths of attaining divine knowledge: the first is by luck, as might apply to the unorganized thinker; the second is only for serious scholars.

The exegesis of others adds little because the twin parables are generally taken together as finds-sells-buys stories. Although this parable does not mention the joy of the find, it is implied from the previous parable. Jeremias adds that, in antiquity, some pearls were worth the equivalent of millions of dollars in today's currency. He considers the fact that the pearl is found only after search, as opposed to accident, is irrelevant,⁸³ which is surely incorrect. Young points out the Gnostic metaphor of the pearl as the soul, which occurs in the apocryphal *Acts of Thomas* 113:104-105; *Acts of Peter* 20; and *Acts of John* 109;⁸⁴ this would make the parable a search for the soul, however, not for divine knowledge as such, and seems somewhat clumsy but may nevertheless be valid. Hultgren is convinced that the presence of the search means that the parable is addressed to Jesus' disciples, not the crowds, which seems reasonable.⁸⁵

13. The Vineyard Laborers. (Matt 20:1-16). "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the

away immortality for his earthly kingdom. Plato did not want Homer's works in his utopist republic, perhaps partially because of irreverence to the divine such as this.

⁸³ Jeremias, *Parables*, 200.

⁸⁴ Young, *Parables*, 205.

⁸⁵ Hultgren, *Parables*, 420-22.

laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

This parable, like several others, describes a situation that is unreal in regard to the material world. However, it is entirely real in regard to the seeking out of the divine knowledge of the intelligible world. It does not matter if a person has been seeking the Kingdom of God since they were very young, or started late in life. Granted, the effort does require some length of time at labor, for people cannot wait until they are on their deathbed to commence to climb the stairway to heaven because the pursuit of knowledge does not come easy. Although enlightenment can be sudden, it is preceded by a slow growth. Philo explained that the human soul can only receive God's gifts in due measure, and

not all at once but as daily bread, “the day’s portion for a day. For to begin with it [the soul] will be unable to contain all at once the abundant wealth of the precious gifts of God, but will be overwhelmed by them as by the rush of torrent.”⁸⁶ Divine nourishment, like food or fertilizer, cannot be taken all at once, but takes time.

The parable’s message is that it may not be too late if the necessary labor is started immediately. If a person is able to achieve it, no matter how long he or she worked at it, the reward is the same.⁸⁷ The parable thus says that divine knowledge is a gift from God. The action by humans can only prepare for the bestowing of divine knowledge, but cannot cause it to happen. The grumbling people seems to refer to those disciples who yet await the *amazement* phase that others coming later have experienced. Jesus is saying that this *amazement* does not follow a fixed schedule; some get it quite late in life. The reward is the same no matter when it happens.

The exegesis of others approaches a census that the parable is simply about the mercy and generosity of God. Jeremias warns not to focus on the equal payment, but on the calling and the reversal of rank on the eschatological Last Day by the merciful God.⁸⁸ Dodd seems to agree, saying that the parable is about divine generosity and compassion for the poor and unemployed.⁸⁹ Crossan, as well as most other scholars, thinks the last verse to be not original.

⁸⁶ *Leg.* 3.163 (Colson, LCL). Cf. Matt 6:11; Luke 11:3, concerning daily bread.

⁸⁷ A rabbinic parallel is found in *Semahot* 3.2, as noted by Young, *Parables*, 75.

⁸⁸ Jeremias, *Parables*, 35-37, 136.

⁸⁹ Dodd, *Parables*, 94.

He also thinks that the parable represents a reversal of expectations for the eschatological advent of God.⁹⁰ Young agrees that it is about God's unmerited favor and unlimited grace.⁹¹ Hultgren agrees, but asks if the audience was the Pharisees instead of the disciples, who grumbled. Even so, he says the parable emphasizes not what we do for God, but what God does for us.⁹²

14. The Barren Tree. (Luke 13:6-9). "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

The previous parable emphasized that it may not be too late to repent.

This parable says that, nevertheless, there is a time limit involved to nourish the soul, or, importantly, to have the soul fertilized by the gardener or vinedresser (*ampelourgos*). It also recognizes the significant labor involved in preparing the soil so that the tree may bear fruit, which in some cases, does not come about at all. It must be remembered at this point that the responsibility to prepare the soil rests with the human, which is the only action that humans are responsible for and are capable of carrying out, under divine guidance. The message to the disciples is: get to work;

⁹⁰ Crossan, *In Parables*, 109-17.

⁹¹ Young, *Parables*, 69, 81.

⁹² Hultgren, *Parables*, 39-43.

check the soil to see why things are not bearing fruit, study harder; stop wasting time.

Jeremias considers that the gardener may “conceal the figure of Jesus himself.”⁹³ This interpretation of Jesus as gardener of the soul, who directs the nourishment of the soul by the divine *Logos*, to result in salvation, is consistent with the overarching theme of this thesis; however, the ground work, so to speak, is left to the human.

The exegesis of others leans toward the apocalyptic. Jeremias says that the parable represents a reprieve from final judgment: “When the limit granted by God for repentance has run out, no human power can prolong it.”⁹⁴ Perrin, however, interprets the parable as a “warning addressed to Israel,” with the judgment as the act of final consummation.⁹⁵ Crossan only says that the parable “demands a decision,” after one “accepts the bothersome inevitability of what must be done.”⁹⁶ Funk notes that the fig tree is a “common sign of divine blessings in Jewish lore,” and that the extension of life “strikes the reader as a futile and thus exaggerated effort.”⁹⁷ Hultgren notes the inclusion of a parallel in the *Apocalypse of Peter* 2.6, but concludes that the parable says that “God’s wrath is being

⁹³ Jeremias, *Parables*, 170.

⁹⁴ Jeremias, *Parables*, 170-71.

⁹⁵ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 189.

⁹⁶ Crossan, *In Parables*, 82.

⁹⁷ Funk, *Parables of Jesus*, 20. The Jesus seminar judged this parable to be authentic.

stirred up and will be revealed at the final judgment," as in Romans 2:4.

Meanwhile, "each day is a day of grace."⁹⁸

15. The Closed Door. (Matt 25:1-13. Cf. Luke 13:25). "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! There will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

For some pursuers of wisdom, after the soul commences to grow due to the acquisition of philosophical knowledge, there can occur the event of visitation by the *Logos*, which provides confirmation of the act of conversion to wisdom. The exact time of this visitation cannot be known, but the soul has a general idea when it is ready.⁹⁹ This event can happen to the person prepared by wisdom, but the opportunity can also happen to a person who cannot partake in the event because he or she is not ready. The search for lamp oil at midnight is futile. The search for wisdom at this point of missed opportunity is also futile.

⁹⁸ Hultgren, *Parables*, 241-46.

⁹⁹ Philo. *Praem.* 15 and *Virt.* 182 describe this *sudden* conversion to virtue.

Philo provides an important clue to the allegorization of this parable by stating that when the human soul, which is ordinarily like a woman corrupted by passion, becomes divinely inspired, it becomes a virgin, throwing off all corruption in its pursuit of wisdom.¹⁰⁰ The virginity of a soul is not the same as that of the body, but rather is dependent upon the accumulation of divine knowledge made possible by the practice of the four philosophical virtues. Furthermore, virginity is a condition that the soul grows into by the pursuit of wisdom.

In the parables discussed herein, Jesus has used the analogies of thief, prostitute, rapacious master, assassin, and inside trader to illustrate his gospel dramatically. It should not come as a shock that Jesus now uses the analogy of sexual union behind closed doors to make a very important point.¹⁰¹ The educated soul is related to a virgin girl, or, more precisely, the fertile and ready womb of a virgin girl. The oil of the lamp seems to represent the moist seed of the *Logos* that is to be implanted within the soul.¹⁰² Without this act in the bridal chamber, the soul, like the womb, cannot grow further. Just as no one knows

¹⁰⁰ QE 2.3.

¹⁰¹ Vermes, *Jesus and the World*, 51, sees a dramatic element in the notion of the "cunning and selfish" virgins in a "travesty of Jesus' teachings on generosity and confident prayer."

¹⁰² So says Clement, *Strom.* 5.3, who relates the oil of the lamps of the virgins to divine wisdom, which acts to dispel the darkness of ignorance. Clement also cites Plato's *Alcibiades Major*, *Phaedo* 52 and *Republic* 494A to show that the opportunity for visitation by divine Wisdom was previously available to only a few, but now, like rain, it is sent down on the just and unjust alike (Matt 5:45).

exactly what goes on in the bridal chamber when couples engage in sexual union, likewise no one knows exactly when the *Logos* will impregnate the soul.¹⁰³

The Platonic notion of *sudden* enlightenment occurring after a long period of the pursuit of wisdom was discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. David Winston explains Philo's understanding of the process, "distinguishing between the psychological events that ultimately lead up to a complete change in the individual's psyche, which usually constitute a slow, lengthy process, and the moment of conversion itself to wisdom."¹⁰⁴

This parable is difficult to handle by exegetes because of its sexual imagery. Note that it is not clear that Jesus is the bridegroom. The bridegroom is the *Logos*, and in order for Jesus to be recognized as the bridegroom, he must be recognized as the *Logos* personified.¹⁰⁵ Accordingly, the traditional message of the parable is reduced to the banal "be prepared." It was not generally realized by exegetes that the event to prepare for is not death, but is the visitation of the *Logos* to the human *Psyche* that gives the true assurance that the soul is on its way toward further growth and salvation. This confirmation of entry into the Kingdom of God is a very important event in a person's life. Even so, Philo

¹⁰³ See Robert Grant, "Mystery," 129-40.

¹⁰⁴ Winston, *Ancestral Philosophy*, 185. Winston notes that the Stoics thought this way also: long work then sudden wisdom.

Philo describes repentance both as a soul being "suddenly [*exaiphnēs*] possessed with an ardent yearning for betterment, eager to leave its inbred covetousness and injustice and come over to soberness and justice and the other virtues" [*Praem.* 15]. Furthermore, "repentance [*metanoia*] is a restricted and slow and tarrying thing" [*Fug.* 159].

¹⁰⁵ Robert Grant, "Mystery," 129.

explained that even after this sacred marriage between *Logos* and *Psyche*, a divorce is possible if the soul ignores the husband, the *Logos*.¹⁰⁶ In that way, the parable is also about the courage required to stick to the task of preparedness for the visitation. It is a common error of exegetes to interpret the visitation of the *Logos* as an apocalyptic event; it simply is not.

The sacred marriage of the masculine *Logos* to the feminine *Psyche* can be traced to statements attributed to Pythagoras.¹⁰⁷ It is clearly a Greek concept, even though Jewish wisdom literature had an analogous concept of intercourse, if not marriage, between a wise soul and divine wisdom. The early Church adopted the idea of the *Logos* as Jesus, and a holy marriage.¹⁰⁸ By the fourth century, the bride was no longer associated with the human soul, and had become the Church.¹⁰⁹

The exegesis of others tends to struggle greatly with this parable before reducing it to the banal "be prepared." Jeremias says that it is not about

¹⁰⁶ See the discussion of Philo's notion of the marriage between *Psyche* and *Logos* in Chapter 3.

¹⁰⁷ See Chapter 3 for the critical sentence of Pythagoras concerning the marriage of *psychē* and *Nous*.

¹⁰⁸ See especially *The Gospel of Phillip* 67, 69, 70, and 81. The doctrine of the bridal chamber is also found in 2nd and 3rd century works such as the *Dialogue of the Savior*, the *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Exegesis on the Soul*, the *Authoritative Teaching*, the *Second Treatise of the Great Seth*, the *Acts of Thomas*, and the *Shepherd of Hermas*.

Jeremias (53) says the notion of heavenly bridegroom was a later addition to the Jesus tradition, being first mentioned by Paul in 2 Cor 11:2, as "marriage to one husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

¹⁰⁹ Mark Elliott, *The Song of Songs and Christology in the Early Church, 381-451* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 120-23.

watchfulness, because the focus is in the oil. Nor is it either originally a reference to the Parousia or to the heavenly bridegroom, which were elements added later. It simply refers to the "imminent eschatological crisis."¹¹⁰ Perrin simply labels the parable as a "parable of decision," as discussed above, also incorrectly noting that the Parousia references are later additions.¹¹¹ Dodd says that the "keep awake" was added by Matthew "to emphasize the folly of unpreparedness and wisdom of preparedness ... for the developments actually in process in the ministry of Jesus." It was intended to enforce the recognition "that the Kingdom of God was present in all its momentous consequences, and that by their conduct in the presence of this tremendous crisis they would judge themselves as faithful or unfaithful, wise or foolish."¹¹² Crossan says the parable's message is simply that the wise prepare and the unwise "fail to take adequate precautions and miss the wedding banquet."¹¹³ Young, like Jeremias, says that the parable is eschatological, and that the time of judgment is unknown.¹¹⁴ Hultgren agrees with Jeremias that the problem is the lack of oil. He says that the parable is a full-blown allegory, that Jesus is the bridegroom, and that although the message is

¹¹⁰ Jeremias, *Parables*, 51-53, 171-75. It is not agreed that the Parousia is a later addition. What is being awaited is not an eschatological event, but the coming of the divine *Logos* into the *psychē*. What is important is for the recipient not to lose courage in awaiting this event.

¹¹¹ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 80, 137.

¹¹² Dodd, *Parables*, 136-39.

¹¹³ Crossan, *In Parables*, 83.

¹¹⁴ Young, *Parables*, 282.

"be wise and prepared for the long haul ... the bridegroom will come," the bridegroom represents the eschatological Son of Man.¹¹⁵

Parables of the Growth of the Soul

16. **The Sower.** (Matt 13:3-9//Mark 4:3-20; Luke 8:5-15; Gos. Thom. 9). And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good ground and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!

No farmer of any worth would throw seed on a path, or in thorns or rocks. This parable, then, is not about the material world. The author's explanation in Matthew 13:18 that the seed is the divine Word (*Logos*) of the kingdom can be accepted, but the author seems to be guessing about the other metaphors involved. The identification of seed with *logos* is a "stock analogy," as is the sower to the teacher, sowing to teaching, and soils for students.¹¹⁶ The *logos* referred to here is clearly the divine *Logos*, the "Word of the Kingdom," that is only understandable in light of Greek philosophical thought, and carries with it the

¹¹⁵ Hultgren, *Parables*, 173-78.

¹¹⁶ Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, 160. Burton Mack and Vernon Robbins, in *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1989), 150, note that although the parable of **The Sower** has several strong parallels in Greco-Roman literature, it is unfortunate that exegetes quickly rush toward weaker citations from Old Testament, Rabbinic, and Apocalyptic sources.

entire meaning of the word as described by Plato and Philo. This parable is critical in that it sets up the analogy for other parables of growth, where it can be safely assumed that the seeds involved are seeds of divine knowledge that enter a soul as it is educated.¹¹⁷

The single, simple point to be made here is that most of the divine knowledge that may be taught is wasted on students who, for one reason or another, do nothing with it. The parable is structured to address the four cardinal virtues of Platonic philosophy. Some students, having no virtue of basic *wisdom*, ignore it altogether, like seed on a hard path. Others, having no *sobriety* choke out the pursuit of wisdom with addiction to thorny passions. Still others react to it but lack the *courage* to persevere in its pursuit, let it wither. Still others have these virtues, and the reward of God's *justice* is beyond imagination.

The parable of the Sower is entirely meaningless unless the hearer knows the concept of soul growth by the nourishment of divine knowledge made possible by virtue. Matthew 13:19 attempts to explain that the word of the Kingdom of God nourishes what is sown in the heart; that is, the seat of the soul of the one who understands it. Without this understanding of the word, the soul withers and becomes vulnerable to evil. What was originally sown in the soul, without the benefit of nourishment, will effectively be taken away by evil.

¹¹⁷ Clement of Alexandria devoted an entire book, *Christ the Educator*, to explain the *Logos* as teacher or pedagogue/instructor who nourishes the soul by guiding it to all requisite knowledge (See 1.1). Origen, in *Exhortation to Martyrdom* (49), related the seed of the parable of **The Sower** to divine nourishment of the soul and to Paul's notion of growth, "you are God's field, God's building" (1 Cor 3:9).

As explained in earlier chapters of this thesis, Plato and Philo drive home the meaning of soul growth time after time, so that a student of theirs could not possibly miss the parable's meaning. Aristotle also had tied the notion of soil and seed to the act of learning:

Again, theory [*logos*] and teaching [*didachē*], are not, I fear, equally efficacious in all cases: the soil [*psychē*, soul] must have been previously tilled [*prodiērgazomai*] if it is to foster [*thephō*] the seed [*sperma*], the mind [*psychē*] of the pupil must have been prepared by the cultivation of habits [*ethos*], so as to like and dislike aright.¹¹⁸

Cicero says it in more flowery terms, tying knowledge to the seeds of divine virtue and the innocence of children.

It is that human capacity is so constituted by nature that it appears designed to achieve every kind of virtue; hence children, without instruction, are actuated by semblances of the virtues, of which they possess in themselves the seeds, for these are primary elements of our nature, and they sprout and blossom into virtue. For we are so constituted from birth as to contain within us the primary instincts of action, of affection, of liberality and of gratitude; we are also gifted with minds that are adapted to knowledge, prudence and courage, and averse from their opposites; hence there is a reason why we observe in children those sparks of virtue I have mentioned, from which the philosopher's torch of reason must be kindled, that he may follow reason [*ratio*] as his divine guide and so arrive at nature's goal.¹¹⁹

Holte has analyzed the term *logos spermatikos* as used by the Stoics, Antiochus of Ascalon, Philo, and Justin Martyr, and concluded that although all

¹¹⁸ Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* 1179B (Rackham, LCL). Note also the interplay of *psychē* to mean soil. See also Philo, *Leg.* 1.246, where deep and rich soil grows virtue and goodness while thin and poor soil grows badness. See also Heb 6:7-8.

¹¹⁹ *Fin.* 5.15.43. See also 5.21.59-60, where Nature "bestowed an intellect capable of receiving every virtue, and implanted in it at birth and without instruction embryonic notions of the loftiest ideas, laying the foundation of its education, and introducing among its endowments the elementary constituents, so to speak, of virtue" (Rackham, LCL).

seem to use the term in slightly different ways, there is common ground. Holte says that "The conceptions which arise by the activity of reason can therefore also be appellated 'seeds' and 'sparks.' From this it appears that these 'seeds' are not strictly identical with the *Spermatic Logos*, but are instead products of its activity."¹²⁰ Holte, however, says that Justin brilliantly separated the concept of *logos* as seed, which is natural theology, from the concept of *logos* as growth, which is only through Jesus.¹²¹ Jesus did not claim that he personally was uniquely qualified to provide growth for the soul, but Justin claimed this for Christianity.

The exegesis of others is diverse and speculative. Jeremias says the term *logos* itself was coined by the early Church, and is not authentic to Jesus. Furthermore, the Church shifted the meaning away from this parable's true eschatological meaning and turned "it into a warning to the converted against a failure to stand fast in time of persecution and against worldliness." The key, says Jeremias, is in the harvest, not the sowing, with the resultant yield that "symbolizes the eschatological overflowing of the divine fullness, surpassing all human measure."¹²² Dodd agrees that the early Church reinterpreted the parable, but to make the preacher, not Jesus, the sower. The sowing is not important to Dodd because it is in the past and now, regardless of any failures,

¹²⁰ Holte, *Logos Spermaticos*, 137.

¹²¹ Holte, *Logos Spermaticos*, 142.

¹²² Jeremias, *Parables*, 150.

the harvest is ready. He uses John 4:38, "I sent you to reap what you have not worked for," as the key to the parable being about the harvest, not the sowing. The harvest is the conversion of the people by the disciples preaching.¹²³ Crossan says only the Markan version is authentic. He uses 1 Cor 15:35-44 as the key, even though this passage clearly refers to resurrection, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body." He says that the message is not about the growth but the miracle surprise of the yield. Young focuses on the explanative passage in Luke 8:15, "the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patient endurance." Young offers the following, based on a rabbinical discussion in the Mishnah:

According to Jesus, the person with a good heart will allow the miracle of growth to take place. He or she receives the word, which is like a seed planted in fertile soil. Such a disciple allows the seed to grow. He or she hears the message with keen receptivity and obeys the teaching by putting it into practice. The disciple with a good heart seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. This is the path for a full and meaningful life.¹²⁴

Plato, Philo and Jesus might very well agree with Young's assessment. Hultgren admits that any kind of exegesis of this popular parable is speculative. He concludes that, according to Luke, at least, a "person must cultivate the heart prior to hearing the Word of God; there must be a preparation for the gospel." In this assessment, there is no disagreement with this thesis.

¹²³ Dodd, *Parables*, 145-50.

¹²⁴ Young, *Parables*, 275. The Mishnah citation is *Avot* 2:9.

17. The Mustard Seed. (Matt 13:31-32//Mark 4:31-32; Luke 13:19; Gos. Thom. 20). He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests (*kataskēnoō*) in its branches."

The mustard plant never grows into a tree, but the human soul can grow to immense size with the nourishment of divine knowledge attained by the pursuit of wisdom. Philo thought that the soul could be filled up with wisdom, so as to leave no room whatsoever for wrong thinking or folly.¹²⁵ Plato considered that the soul could grow to the size of a star.¹²⁶ Seneca came very close to the content of this parable.

Words should be scattered like seed; no matter how small the seed may be, if it has once found favorable ground, it unfolds its strength and from an insignificant thing spreads to its greatest growth. Reason [*ratio*] grows in the same way; it is not large to the outward view, but increases as it does its work. Few words are spoken; but if the mind has truly caught them, they come into their strength and spring up. Yes, precepts and seeds have the same quality; they produce much, and yet they are slight things. Only, as I said, let a favorable mind receive and assimilate them. Then of itself the mind also will produce bounteously in its turn, giving back more that it has received.¹²⁷

Seneca has here related the growth of a seed to the growth of reason in the human mind, but only if the seed of reason falls on fertile ground; that is, into a fertile mind that is receptive to it.

¹²⁵ *Praem.* 65.

¹²⁶ *Tim.* 41D-E.

¹²⁷ *Ep.* 38.2 (Gummere, LCL).

The exegesis of others, as Dodd explains, emphasizes one of three comparisons to the Kingdom of God: (1) the *seed* as an inward germinal principle, a divine principle within the soul; (2) the whole *process* of growth as “the divine energy immanent in the world by which the purpose of God is gradually achieved”; or (3) the *harvest* of the “eschatological school.” Dodd’s exegesis also focuses on the harvest, but he sees the harvest as not a future eschatological event but available for reaping *now*.¹²⁸ Jeremias claims that *kataskēnoō* is “an eschatological technical term,” for the “incorporation of the Gentiles into the people of God,” which seems far-fetched. He also claims that seed is “the image of resurrection, the symbol of mystery of life out of death,” in accordance with 1 Cor 15:35-38, but not addressing the explicit statement in Matthew 13:18, Mark 4:14, and Luke 8:11, that the seed is the divine *Logos*. For Jeremias, the parable is about the eschatological harvest yet to come.¹²⁹ Crossan says that the parable is not about growth, but about the miracle of transformation. Hultgren says that it is about the coming of the Kingdom of God, and is “a word of promise” that “it will be glorious.” Strangely, he comments quite differently on the *Gospel of Thomas* version, saying that the mustard seed “represents the spark of light, the enlightenment that comes to the Gnostic and

¹²⁸ Dodd, *Parables*, 141-42, 152-55.

¹²⁹ Jeremias, *Parables*, 146-53.

the tilled ground refers to the readiness of the Gnostic to receive it."¹³⁰ Plato and Philo could accept Hultgren's latter exegesis.

18. The Sprouting Seed. (Mark 4:26-29. Cf. *Gos. Thom.* 21). He also said, "The Kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

People in antiquity did not know the exact biological process of growth of a seed into a plant. The growth represented a miracle of life that was given only by God. Humans could plant and water, but only God could give the growth.¹³¹ In a similar vein, no one knows exactly what the mechanism is for the growth of the soul, except that it is nourished by wisdom. The growth of the soul, like that of a seed, is a result of God's action. The human has a part in this, though, as the conditioner of the *soil* to make sure that the soul is fertile and pure for the accommodation of the *Logos*. The human soul cannot grow without the grace of God, but neither will it thrive without the work of the human involved. In this parable, however, the human's action of preparation and planting is best de-emphasized to frame the notion of mysterious growth.¹³²

This parable says that there are three stages of growth – sprout, grow, and ripen for harvest – that are consistent with the thought of Philo's stairway to

¹³⁰ Hultgren, *Parables*, 392-403.

¹³¹ See 1 Cor 3:6-7, "God gave the growth."

¹³² Recall the Stoic notion that *all* action, overt or covert, is performed by the *Logos*.

heaven, or three contests of the soul. Eventually, at death or harvest, the soul “at once” leaves the body. If it has been properly nourished and grown, it will result in a bountiful reward. This parable is not about the glimpse of God while still alive, but of the harvest of the philosophically mature soul at death.

The exegesis of others tends to follow that of the aforementioned parables of growth. Jeremias again says that the harvest is the advent of the completion of the eschatological term that brings in the Last Judgment and the Kingdom. Humanity can only wait. “God’s hour comes irresistibly. He has made the decisive beginning, the seed has been sown.”¹³³ Dodd says that the “time has come when the gains of the whole process may be realized.”¹³⁴ Crossan says that the emphasis should be on the farmer as the reaper, not the seed or the growth. The reaping is the only thing required of humanity. This, he says, is a “Parable of Action” that demands “firm and resolute action, prompt and energetic decision.” Crossan admits that he cannot sort out Jesus’ words from the later Church emphasis.¹³⁵ Hultgren says that this parable shows the Kingdom of God as “coming into being,” with no human involvement needed. “Focus is directed instead on the growth and fruition of the seed that was sown. That process takes place apart from human effort.”¹³⁶

¹³³ Jeremias, *Parables*, 151-52.

¹³⁴ Dodd, *Parables*, 146.

¹³⁵ Crossan, *In Parables*, 82-83.

¹³⁶ Hultgren, *Parables*, 385-91.

19. The Leaven. (Matt 13:33//Luke 13:20-21; *Gos. Thom.* 96). He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour (*aleuron*) until all of it was leavened."

This parable is similar to the previous one. Most exegetes consider it a twin to the parable of **The Mustard Seed**. The exact chemical action of the leaven or yeast need not be known, like that of divine knowledge in the soul. Humans do not need to know how the leaven grows. God grows the soul mysteriously. It is God's job to make things grow, and only God can do it.

The exegesis of others follows that of **The Mustard Seed**. Jeremias says that dough represents the people of God. As proof-text, he cites Romans 11:16, "If the part of the dough (*phyrama*, lump) offered as first fruits is holy," thereby equating *phyrama* to *aleuron*, which seems to be stretched. Even so, he concludes that the Kingdom of God is like leaven "worked from within, mightily permeating the dead lump of religious Judaism in his [Jesus'] time."¹³⁷ Crossan correctly says that the parable expresses the "hiddenness and mystery" of God, which cannot be seen, but "the swelling of the bread makes it evident to all that it was there."¹³⁸ Hultgren says the parable is a message of encouragement, for "God has a grand outcome in store for the whole creation. The present is a time

¹³⁷ Jeremias, *Parables*, 154-55.

¹³⁸ Crossan, *In Parables*, 38.

for realizing it only in part, and seeing through a glass only darkly.... The parable reminds us that, as the leaven is hidden, so is the Kingdom."¹³⁹

20. More Will Be Given. (Matt 13:10-12//Mark 4:10-11, 25; Luke 8:9-10, 18; 19:26). Then the disciples came and asked him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" He answered, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away."

In Plato's and Philo's theological system, each soul is initially given a *seed*, which is a little bit of virtue and knowledge equal to that given to every other soul, and with it, the desire to grow. All souls are created equal, insofar as this initial knowledge is concerned. It is what we do with what we were given that is of paramount importance. The disciples were personally taught by Jesus in the secrets of divine knowledge, which should have, and likely did, cause their souls to blossom and grow.

If the initial *seed* in the soul is disciplined by virtue and responds to the God-given nurture and grows, then the enlarged soul is rewarded. But if the soul is not enlarged from what it was initially given, then it will wither and be lost to the Kingdom of God, not exactly destroyed, but rendered useless. The simple, single point of this parable is that the soul given each human will either grow, enabled by virtue and wisdom, or die.

The exegesis of others sometimes reaches the same conclusion.

Jeremias has an exceptionally negative view, saying that perhaps these verses

¹³⁹ Hultgren, *Parables*, 403-09.

were based on a proverb, "That's what life is like, unjust."¹⁴⁰ Dodd correctly explains that Jesus' original notion was "A man who possesses spiritual capacity will enlarge that capacity by experience, while a man who has none will decline into a worse condition as time goes on."¹⁴¹ Crossan seems to agree, quoting Basho, the Zen Buddhist, "One can be despoiled of nothing," but "nothing does not really mean nothing."¹⁴² Young correctly relates the parable to education, and quotes the Mishnah concerning the four types of student disciple, the best being swift to hear and slow to lose, the worst being slow to hear and swift to lose.¹⁴³ Hultgren summarizes his exegesis as, "Whenever God's gift has already borne fruit, God gives in greater abundance; where it has been fruitless, it is lost completely."¹⁴⁴ Dodd places the blame on the overly cautious servant, who is "the type of pious Jew who comes in for so much criticism in the Gospels. He seeks personal security in a meticulous observance of the Mosaic law."¹⁴⁵ Crossan says this is a parable of action that is a "linguistic attempt to shatter the complacency of one's world in the name of the Kingdom advent," but nevertheless is about a wise "servant calculating what he must do in the critical

¹⁴⁰ Jeremias, *Parables*, 62.

¹⁴¹ Dodd, *Parables*, 117.

¹⁴² Crossan, *In Parables*, 75-76.

¹⁴³ Young, *Parables*, 265. Young uses *Avot* 5.12 here.

¹⁴⁴ Hultgren, *Parables*, 277.

¹⁴⁵ Dodd, *Parables*, 115-19.

reckoning to which his master summons him."¹⁴⁶ Young correctly notes that "by burying the money, he lost all possible profit," and his good intentions were not enough, for when fear guides, the person loses.¹⁴⁷ Hultgren says the parable means that "all gifts of God are temporary," and we are to "make use of those gifts that God has given." The burying is a lack of use of these gifts. However, taking risks is also the work of faith in action; thus, like Martin Luther, "one should be bold and not be afraid of risks."¹⁴⁸

21. The Entrusted Money. (Matt 25:14-30//Luke 19:12-27). "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man,

¹⁴⁶ Crossan, *In Parables*, 98-101, 113-17.

¹⁴⁷ Young, *Parables*, 82-83.

¹⁴⁸ Hultgren, *Parables*, 279-81.

reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

Like several others, this parable utilizes a scandalous situation for dramatic effort, because Jewish law forbids the loaning of money to other Jews with the demand for interest.¹⁴⁹ The parable of **The Entrusted Money** has the same meaning as the previous parable. The master entrusted his servants with a very large and valuable loan that he expected would produce a return. This is analogous to God loaning us an immensely valuable soul, expecting that it will be grown and returned more developed and mature than originally given. It is not enough to attempt to maintain the value of the soul; that is, simply to avoid sin. The investment in the soul must be grown by virtue, education, and the accumulation of wisdom.

What is a surprise in this parable is that there is a *conservation of souls* implied here in that the growth of some souls makes up for other souls that shrink. This would make sense if the inherent theology is that the human soul is not only divine but a part of God, hence eternal and non-destructible. That is, the

¹⁴⁹ See Exod 22:25; Prov 28:8; Ezek 18:8-17; Neh 5:1-13.

soul that is lost is somehow given to and added to the soul that is eligible to grow, and that there is no destruction of a soul, however sinful the human is.

The exegesis of others generally guesses at how the third servant went wrong. Jeremias says that the fault is that of the master, who was a brutal despot, "feared by his servants as an inconsiderate and rapacious employer." The real message, says Jeremias, is that of the delay of the Parousia, wherein the parable is "intended to arouse a deluded people and their leaders to a realization of the awful gravity of the moment. The catastrophe will come as unexpectedly as the nocturnal house-breaker."¹⁵⁰

Parables of Eternal Reward

22. The Budding Fig Tree (Matt 24:32-36; Mark 13:28-32; Luke 21:29-33). 'From the fig tree learn its lesson; as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he [it, or as in Luke, the Kingdom of God] is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

This parable is in the triple synoptic tradition. It can best be understood in consideration of the notion of the growth of the soul to a point where the Kingdom of God, or the *Logos* of the Kingdom of God, is about to appear. No one knows exactly when this event will happen, but its nearness can nevertheless be felt as the soul grows in wisdom. As Plato and his followers, especially Philo,

¹⁵⁰ Jeremias, *Parables*, 60-63.

explained, this salvific enlightenment sudden. Yet, to some extent it can be expected momentarily, but can neither be scheduled nor predicted with exactness. It comes soon for some, late for others, and not at all for many.

It is recognized that this parable follows several verses that clearly describe the apocalyptic coming of the Son of Man. However, because the coming of the Kingdom of God does not refer to an apocalyptic event, this parable is out of place here. The possibility must be considered that this saying originally addressed the coming of the Kingdom of God in the enlightenment sense, but was later appropriated to show a prediction of the catastrophic events that occurred after the death of Jesus but prior to the Gospels being written.

The exegesis of others may or may not recognize the apocalyptic implication. Surprisingly, Jeremias supports the above statement that apocalyptic was not the original meaning of this parable, but came later: "The present context (the discourse about the signs of the end) is a secondary composition." "The fig tree putting out its leaves is a sign of the coming blessing (Joel 2:22)." The original "simile was intended by Jesus to direct the minds of his disciples not toward the horrors of the end of the age, but towards the signs of the time of salvation."¹⁵¹ Dodd agrees, saying that the 40 years between the death of Jesus and the fall of Jerusalem has "colored our records." "The generation which suffered the calamities of the Roman war was not, in any real sense, the same generation as that of 40 years before." Jesus was simply calling upon men to

¹⁵¹ Jeremias, *Parables*, 119-20.

recognize the significance of the situation in which, at the moment, they stood.”¹⁵² Crossan says the parable is similar in message to that of **The Leaven**, which is “the epiphany of the advent and its presence.”¹⁵³ Young notes that the “suddenness is emphasized, not the timing.” Constant preparation is paramount, for “God’s realm of glory and transcendence can eclipse the domain of all humanity” at any time.¹⁵⁴ Hultgren, however, sticks to the thinking that the parable is part of the “apocalyptic discourse.”¹⁵⁵

23. Planted Weeds. (Matt 13:24-30//Gos. *Thom.* 57). He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

This parable explains the theodicy and eschatology of the theological system involved. Again, the seed represents knowledge, and there is both good

¹⁵² Dodd, *Parables*, 48, 107.

¹⁵³ Crossan, *In Parables*, 38.

¹⁵⁴ Young, *Parables*, 296.

¹⁵⁵ Hultgren, *Parables*, 207, 311.

knowledge and bad. As Plato related, there exists truth and folly side-by side.¹⁵⁶ Jesus' prime example of bad knowledge seemed to be the teachings of the Pharisees. Once the mind is filled with bad knowledge, it is very difficult to sort out and remove. The soul that allows the cultivation of bad knowledge will not be killed off or punished until the time of the body's death.

Socrates would advise to use *elenchus* on the erring student, and not to let the bad knowledge grow at all. Socrates, however, had only a few students to deal with at any one time. Jesus taught the crowds and could not afford to indulge in *elenchus* with the multitude. Furthermore, *elenchus* only works well when the student has been trained to recognize the basics of logic; there are no such indications from the multitude that followed Jesus.

In the systems of Plato, Philo, and Jesus, justice begins with divine justice. Both Jesus and Philo said that the rain falls on the just and unjust alike.¹⁵⁷ God does not intervene to punish the living, nor are humans supposed to act as a divine judge. Plato's notion of divine justice involved judgment of the soul after the death of the body; Jesus' system of justice is consistent with Platonism.

The exegesis of others mostly tends to be concerned about who is being represented by the weeds. Jeremias says that traditional exegesis has the weeds being the "Jews who have forfeited their title to the Kingdom of God." He considers this parable's message to be the same as that of **The Fishnet**. He

¹⁵⁶ Protagoras' book, entitled *Truth*, which advocated that man is the measure of all things, was the epitome of bad knowledge, according to Socrates in *Theaet.* 161B-162A.

¹⁵⁷ *Prov.* 2:22-23; *Matt* 5:45. Clement, in *Strom.* 7.15, was also convinced that the tares represented the bad knowledge of heresy.

notes that the farmer is not to blame for the situation, but the enemy.¹⁵⁸ Perrin says that the parable is about the future consummation, which includes the judgment.¹⁵⁹ Dodd says the parable was invented by the early Church, which recognized both good and bad members. He uses 1 Corinthians as proof-text for the developed eschatology of the Church, "Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive commendation from God."¹⁶⁰ Hultgren says it is an "allegorical exposition," whereby the good seed are the children of the Kingdom of God and the weeds are the children of the Evil One. Even so, he says he cannot be sure who the weeds are. The message, however, is about forbearance and patience in the Christian community when the good and bad cannot be separated.¹⁶¹

24. The Assassin. (*Gos. Thom.* 98). Jesus said, "The father's kingdom is like a person who wanted to put someone powerful to death. While at home he drew his sword and thrust it into the wall to find out whether his hand would go in. Then he killed the powerful one."¹⁶²

This parable is difficult for some people because it seems to advocate pre-meditated murder, but, again, the setting is not of the sensual world. The killing of someone, especially someone powerful, is an act that would be highly

¹⁵⁸ Jeremias, *Parables*, 84-85, 224-25.

¹⁵⁹ Perrin, *Kingdom of God*, 188.

¹⁶⁰ Dodd, *Parables*, 147-49. He uses 1 Cor 4:5 here.

¹⁶¹ Hultgren, *Parables*, 292-303.

¹⁶² Meyer, *Gospel of Thomas*, 61.

apprehensible for a righteous person – something very out of the ordinary and terrifying. Death for any human seems to be that way, generating much apprehension and fear. Here, though, the parable is discussing the righteous person practicing his or her own death by practicing to see God, so that, when death comes, the soul knows how to perform the task of getting to heaven.

Plato had said that we must continually practice “freeing ourselves from the foolishness of the body,” or defeating the bodily passions so that after death, the soul can be easily separated and released from it, to allow it to journey back to God.¹⁶³ This parable says that if the soul expects to see God, someday, after death, then it must practice while in the body. This practice “at home” is to educate and train the soul to give up the bodily passions so that they will not weight down the soul upon death. This training would include the practice of virtue that allows the catching of those occasional glimpses of God, as if through a mirror, while the body is alive. What a person trains for on earth will be useful on the journey to heaven. What then is done on earth, will later be done in heaven.¹⁶⁴ The soul that is so practiced will see God after death of the body. Simply to say that the parable means that practice makes perfect, without explaining just what is being practiced, reduces it to banality.

The exegesis of others varies dependent on the exegete’s familiarity with the theology of Gnosticism. Although Jeremias says it “draws upon the stern

¹⁶³ *Phaed.* 67A-E, “the true philosophers practice dying.”

¹⁶⁴ A possible interpretation to Matt 16:19; 18:18.

reality of the Zealot movement," he nevertheless concludes that the message is that a person should test themselves to see whether they have strength to carry the adventure through; that is, test your preparedness.¹⁶⁵ Hultgren, however, correctly says that the powerful man "is probably a vivid metaphor for rejecting the material world."¹⁶⁶ Gregory Riley agrees that the message is about getting the passions under control: "Here the sword is the (ascetic) will and power of the individual soul, which is tested against the 'house' of the body. Once it has shown that it can overcome the body, then the soul is able to overcome the 'strong man.'"¹⁶⁷

25. The Prodigal Son. (Luke 15:11-32). Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.' So he set off and went

¹⁶⁵ Jeremias, *Parables*, 93, 196.

¹⁶⁶ Hultgren, *Parables*, 440-45.

¹⁶⁷ Gregory J. Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered: Thomas and John in Controversy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 152-53, emphasis original. The "strong man" of the passions of lust, greed, and other evils was personified as the devil and introduced into post-exile Judaism by Zoroastrian influences. See also Riley, *River*, 97.

to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe – the best one – and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found! And they began to celebrate.

"Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him! Then the father said to him, 'Son you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'

Traditional exegesis views this parable as describing the reward for repentance, and the joy in heaven when a sinner is converted to Christianity. However, traditional exegetes falter when asked to explain why a converted sinner is more precious than the one who does not sin. The parable need not be over-allegorized. Clearly, all seem to agree that the father is another name for God, which is a stock metaphor. The father's home is another stock metaphor for heaven. Bread, representing divine knowledge as food for the soul, has been discussed throughout this thesis in the context of Greek and Hellenistic theology.

Recognizing these stock symbols, then, the parable is about a son who chooses to leave heaven. He subsequently sins, lives in squalor, and finally realizes who he is and from where he has come, and makes his way back to heavenly God to a great reward, albeit with no ownership of property, but none needed. This parable of Jesus is the epitome of the journey of the soul. It represents the overarching theme of human purpose, existence, sin, salvation and reward. The soul leaves heaven to be placed in a body on earth where it is subjected to lust, greed, and passion, and likely forgets its origin, purpose, and intended destination. Jesus did not say exactly why a soul leaves heaven; nor did Plato. But it does. Salvation is gained when the person living in the squalor of their passions recognizes the need for the food of heaven. A soul thus tested, if it passes the test and returns, is a great cause for joy.¹⁶⁸ God is more pleased with a soul that risks its very existence in order to gain the experiential knowledge that cannot be learned in heaven, than with a soul that plays it safe.

The act when the prodigal son *came to himself* – *εἰς ἑαυτὸν δὲ ἔλθων* – is a very important statement of repentance.¹⁶⁹ There was no savior involved. The son came to himself as a result of knowing himself through human suffering, perhaps the oldest and most powerful, yet the least understood, maxim that appears throughout the entire Golden Chain of Greek philosophy. The picture of

¹⁶⁸ Philo says that a soul who commits wickedness yet repents (*metanoëō*) may “return to the virtue from which he was driven, as an exile returns to his fatherland” (*Cher.* 2 [Colson & Whitaker, LCL]). He who lives in the soul alone, however, has returned to be a dweller in his fatherland (*Her.* 82-83).

¹⁶⁹ Luke 15:17.

the prodigal son, as he considers eating the food of pigs as he lives among the pigs, typically in mud, brings to mind the Orphic myth of the eye of the soul being sunk in the barbaric slough.¹⁷⁰ The prodigal son's life on earth is the life of the unenlightened person, who lives in the mud of the world and has squandered all of his God-given property save for one thing: the vague memories of who he is, from where he has come, to where he must risk everything he has in the material world, in order to return.

The prodigal son is therefore the person who had struggled with the passions of the material world and finally overcame them, learned to know him or her self, and learned the practice of virtue that resulted in the accumulation of divine knowledge. Who was the grumbling elder son? The answer is apparent from the introductory passage to the parables of **The Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin**, and this one: it is the Pharisees and Scribes who are grumbling about Jesus' table sharing with sinners.¹⁷¹ The elder brother, then, represents obedient Judaism, while the prodigal brother represents the lost sheep of Israel, the Hellenistic Jews, whom Jesus had saved through repentance and training in virtue and wisdom.

The exegesis of others struggles with the identity of the two brothers. Jeremias says that the "coming to himself" signifies repentance. Jesus addressed the parable to those who were offended by his gospel, the self-

¹⁷⁰ Resp. 533D. The food for pigs is equivalent to earthly knowledge.

¹⁷¹ Luke 15:2, "And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling (*diagonguzō*) and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'"

righteous elder sons; that is, the Pharisees. It is thus an apologetic parable wherein "Jesus vindicates his table companionship with sinners against his critics."¹⁷² Dodd surmises that "Its point would seem to lie in the contrast between the delight of a father at the return of his scapegrace son, and the churlish attitude of the 'respectable' elder brother."¹⁷³ Crossan thinks it is a "parable of reversal," but is not a defense of Jesus having sinner friends. Rather, says Crossan, it is the reversal of a prodigal son inside feasting and a dutiful son outside pouting."¹⁷⁴ Young notes that both sons are sinners in the Jewish tradition. The elder son sins because he served his father only for the sake of reward, an act condemned by the Mishnah. The message is about a family crisis, and is a call to action.¹⁷⁵ Hultgren struggles with the identity of the brothers. Is the prodigal son Israel? Or is it the Pharisees? Hultgren, however, says that the setting that Luke has provided must be discounted, because both brothers are abusive against the Father.¹⁷⁶ What Hultgren avoids is the conclusion that Jesus' gospel, as it stood at the time, was pleasing to God.

¹⁷² Jeremias, *Parables*, 128-32.

¹⁷³ Dodd, *Parables*, 91.

¹⁷⁴ Crossan, *In Parables*, 72-74, 95.

¹⁷⁵ Young, *Parables*, 48, 130-57. Young uses Avot 1.3 here.

¹⁷⁶ Hultgren, *Parables*, 73-91.

Conclusion to the Exegesis of Jesus' Parables

In order to make sense of the parables of the Kingdom of God, it was first necessary to determine the underlying theology known by Jesus. The common theology in Palestine during the time of Jesus was that of Hellenistic Judaism. There were two paths, not mutually exclusive, that combined to form the amalgam between Greek philosophy and traditional Judaism, to result in Hellenistic Judaism. The Greek philosophical path developed from Platonism into Neo-Pythagoreanism and then into Middle Platonism in the same centuries that the Hellenistic Jewish path developed into Jewish apologetic. These long paths come together to peak in Alexandria just before and during the time of the mission of Jesus.

Key to this mixture of Jewish Apologetic, traditional Judaism, and Middle Platonism was the person of Philo. Philo wrote many books, many of which are extant today, and delivered many lectures to his followers. Before and during Philo's time, there was a school of educated Jewish pupils in Alexandria who were trained to teach other Jews about Hellenistic Judaism as an apology in defense of offensive and potentially dangerous actions from the Romans. These adverse actions were based on disrespect of the Jews, in particular, their dependence upon the Pentateuch with its anthropomorphic description of God that Greco-Roman critics considered as comical and useless. Philo and others at Alexandria acted to change this negative attitude toward Judaism. Philo's chief

tool was the allegorical method of Pentateuch interpretation whereby God and God's actions were shown to be consistent with Greco-Roman philosophy, but of higher standards.

Philo was wealthy enough to publish his books, travel, and teach. Philo and his colleagues trained Hellenized Jewish teachers to go forth into Palestine and the Diaspora to lecture about the new Hellenized Judaism. The obvious platform for this teaching was in a *synagōgē*, on the Sabbath, a day and place that Philo says was reserved for the study of Jewish ancestral philosophy.

Jesus had access to these lectures in the *synagōgēs* in Galilee.¹⁷⁷ Jesus had his own method and ideas to teach a good news message, and effectively formed his own school of disciples to preach this gospel of the Kingdom of God. This gospel can be recovered in most part by separation of the parables and statements attributed to Jesus that specifically address the Kingdom of God. The gospel of the Kingdom of God, accordingly, boils down to ninety-nine statements, and can be understood by analysis of 25 parables. By examination of these statements and parables in light of Hellenistic Jewish theology, a preliminary view of Jesus' gospel of the Kingdom of God has been recovered. The gospel of the Kingdom of God is overwhelmingly Platonic. Every theme emphasizes one or more of the four virtues first taught by Socrates, the mastery of which represent the steps on the ladder to salvation. Jesus' gospel is not apologetic: it went

¹⁷⁷ These *synagōgēs* in Galilee may have been nothing more than regular meeting places for Hellenistic Jews, and may not have particularly involved worship and prayer, instead focusing on Torah reading and plenty of interpretation.

beyond apologetics. Its audience consisted of Hellenistic Jews who were more inclined to obtain salvation through practice of virtue in allegorical interpretation of Jewish law. Those Jews who insisted on a literal interpretation of the Mosaic law considered Jesus' followers to be the *lost sheep* of Israel.

The fact that this recovered gospel has no apocalyptic message will be disappointing to some. Perhaps the most obvious, and for several, the most disturbing finding in the recovered gospel of the Kingdom of God is that entering the Kingdom of God involves a commitment to the discipline of virtue and the hard work of acquiring wisdom, followed by the hard work itself. The work involved is that of the pursuit of wisdom: knowledge about God and the Kingdom of God, of which a student can never be completely finished. In order to perform this labor of learning, it is necessary to practice the four cardinal virtues, to get all human passions under control, and to eliminate vices and addictions, especially sexual lust and the craving for accumulated wealth. The reward, says Jesus, as said Socrates, Plato, and Philo before him, is worth all the effort, because God's justice will provide an amazing reward.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

New Testament/Parables

Barnard, Leslie William. *Justin Martyr: His Life and Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.

----. trans., *St. Justin Martyr: The First and Second Apologies*. New York: Paulist Press, 1997.

Beasley-Murray, George Raymond. *Jesus and the Kingdom of God*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.

Borgen, Peder. *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo*. Leiden: Brill, 1965.

Broek, Roelof van den. "The Authentikos Logos: A New Document of Christian Platonism." *Vigiliae Christianae* 33 (1979): 260-86.

Brown, Raymond E. *The Gospel According to John I-XII*. Anchor Bible 29. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966.

Bultmann, Rudolf. *Gnosis*. Translated by J. R. Coates. London: Adam & Charles Black, 1952.

---. *The Gospel of John*. Translated by G. R. Beasley-Murray, et al. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971.

---. *Jesus and the Word*. Translated by Louise Pettibone Smith and Erminie Huntress. New York: Scribner's, 1934.

---. *Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting*. Translated by Reginald H. Fuller. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1956.

Cadoux, Cecil John. *The Historic Mission of Jesus: A Constructive Re-Examination of the Eschatological Teaching in the Synoptic Gospels*. New York: Harper & Bros., 1943.

Chadwick, Henry, and John Ernest Leonard Oulton, trans. *Alexandrian Christianity: Selected Translations of Clement and Origen with Introductions and Notes*. Library of Christian Classics, vol. 2. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954.

- Charlesworth, James H., and Walter P. Weaver, eds. *Earthing Christologies: From Jesus' Parables to Jesus the Parable*. Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity, 1995.
- Chilton, Bruce, ed. *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.
- Cook, John Granger. *The Interpretation of the New Testament in Greco-Roman Paganism*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000. Repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2002.
- Crossan, John Dominic. *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.
- . *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994.
- . *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus*. Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1992.
- Dahl, Nils Alstrup. "The Parables of Growth." *Studia Theologica* 5 (1952): 132-66.
- Dalman, Gustaf. *The Words of Jesus*. Translated by David Miller Kay. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1909.
- Daniélou, Jean. *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*. Translated by John Austin Baker. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1973.
- Dodd, Charles Harold. *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953.
- . *The Parables of the Kingdom*. Rev. ed. New York: Scribner's, 1961.
- Doherty, Earl. *The Jesus Puzzle: Did Christianity begin with a Mythical Christ?* Ottawa: Canadian Humanist, 1999.
- Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.
- France, Richard T. "On Being Ready." Pages 177-95 in *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*. Edited by Richard N. Longnecker. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Funk, Robert W. *Parables and Presence: Forms of the New Testament Tradition*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982.

Funk, Robert W., Bernard Brandon Scott, and James R. Butts. *The Parables of Jesus: Red Letter Edition: A Report of the Jesus Seminar*. Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1988.

Gifford, Edwin Hamilton, trans. *Eusebius: Preparation for the Gospel*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon: 1903. Repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

Grant, Frederick C. *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. New York: Macmillan, 1940.

Grant, Robert M. "The Mystery of Marriage in the Gospel of Phillip." *Vigiliae Christianae* 15 (1961): 129-40.

Harnack, Adolf von. *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*. Translated and edited by James D. Moffatt. New York: Putnam, 1905.

—. *What is Christianity?* Translated by Thomas Baily Saunders. 1901. Repr., Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.

Hedrick, Charles W. *Parables as Poetic Fictions: The Creative Voice of Jesus*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994.

Hengel, Martin. *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ*. Translated by John Bowden. Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2000.

Hoffman, Joseph R., ed. and trans. *Porphyry's Against the Christians: The Literary Remains*. Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1994.

Holte, Ragnar. "Logos Spermatikos: Christianity and Ancient Philosophy According to St. Justin's Apologies." *Studia Theologica* 12 (1958): 109-68.

Hultgren, Arland J. *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Humphries, Michael L. *Christian Origins and the Language of the Kingdom of God*. Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999.

Jaeger, Werner. *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press (Belknap Press), 1961.

Jeremias, Joachim. *The Parables of Jesus*. Translated by S. H. Hooke. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972.

Jones, Peter Rhea. *Studying the Parables of Jesus*. Macon, Ga.: Smyth & Helwys, 1999.

Jülicher, Adolf. *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*. 2 vols. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1888-1899.

King, Karen. "Kingdom in the Kingdom of God." *Forum* 3 (1987): 48-97.

Kingsbury, Jack Dean. *The Parables of Jesus in Matthew 13: A Study in Redaction-Criticism*. Richmond, Va.: John Knox, 1969.

Longenecker, Richard N., ed. *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Lundström, Gösta. *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus: A History of Interpretation from the Last Decades of the Nineteenth Century to the Present Day*. Translated by John Bulman. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1963.

MacDonald, Dennis R., ed. *Mimesis and Intertextuality in Antiquity and Christianity*. Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2001.

Mack, Burton L. *The Christian Myth: Origins, Logic and Legacy*. New York: Continuum, 2001.

---. "The Kingdom Sayings in Mark." *Forum* 3 (1987): 3-47.

---. *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993.

---. *Rhetoric and the New Testament*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.

Mack, Burton L., and Vernon K. Robbins. *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels*. Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1989.

Marcus, Joel. *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986.

- McKenzie, John L. "The Gospel According to Matthew." Pages 2:62-114 in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Edited by Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Roland E. Murphy. 2 vols. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968.
- Meecham, Henry G. *The Epistle to Diognetus: The Greek Text with Introduction, Translation, and Notes*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1949.
- Meeks, Wayne A. "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 91 (1972): 44-92.
- Meier, John P. *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. 3 Vols. New York: Doubleday, 1991.
- Meyer, Marvin, trans. *The Gospel of Thomas: The Hidden Sayings of Jesus*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992.
- More, Paul Elmer. *The Christ of the New Testament*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1924.
- . *Christ the Word*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1927.
- Munier, Charles, trans. *Saint Justin Apologie pour les Chrétiens: Édition et traduction*. Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires, 1995.
- Nock, Arthur Darby. *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*. London: Oxford University Press, 1933.
- Pearson, Birger A., ed. *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.
- Perkins, Pheme. *Hearing the Parables of Jesus*. New York: Paulist Press, 1981.
- Perrin, Norman. *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963.
- Riley, Gregory J. *The River of God: A New History of Christian Origins*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
- Robbins, Vernon K. *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.

- Robinson, James M., ed. *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*. 3rd ed. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988.
- Rudolph, Kurt. *Gnosis*. Translation edited by Robert McLachlan Wilson. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1983.
- Sanders, E. P. *The Historical Figure of Jesus*. London: Penguin, 1993.
- . "Jesus' Relation to Sepphoris." Pages 75-79 in *Sepphoris in Galilee: Crosscurrents of Culture*. Edited by Rebecca Martin Nagy et al. Raleigh: North Carolina Museum of Art. Distributed by Eisenbrauns, 1996.
- Saucy, Mark. *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus: In 20th Century Theology*. Dallas: Word, 1997.
- Schmithals, Walter. *The Theology of the First Christians*. Translated by O. C. Dean, Jr. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997.
- Schneemelcher, Wilhelm, ed. *New Testament Apocrypha*. Translated by R. McL. Wilson. 2 vols. Rev. ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991-1992.
- Schweitzer, Albert. *The Kingdom of God and Primitive Christianity*. Translated by L. A. Garrard. New York: Seabury, 1968.
- . *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Translated by W. Montgomery. Introduction by James M. Robinson. New York: Macmillan, 1968.
- Scott, Bernard Brandon. *Jesus, Symbol-Maker for the Kingdom*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.
- Skemp, Joseph Bright. *The Greeks and the Gospel*. W. T. Whitley Lectures for 1962. London: Carey Kingsgate, 1964.
- Trumbower, Jeffrey A. *Born from Above: The Anthropology of the Gospel of John*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1992.
- Turner, John D. *Sethian Gnosticism and the Platonic Tradition*. Sainte-Foy, Quebec: University of Laval Press, 2001.
- Vermes, Geza. *Jesus and the World of Judaism*. London: SCM, 1983. Repr., Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.

Wilder, Amos N. *Jesus' Parables and the War of Myths: Essays on Imagination in the Scripture*. Edited with preface by James Breech. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982.

Winterhalter, Robert, and George W. Fisk. *Jesus' Parables: Finding our God Within*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1993.

Witherington, Ben III. *The Christology of Jesus*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.

---. *Jesus the Sage: The Pilgrimage of Wisdom*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.

Young, Brad H. *The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998.

Hellenistic Judaism

Annas, Julia. *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Batey, Richard A. *Jesus and the Forgotten City: New Light on Sepphoris and the Urban World of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.

Bickerman, Elias J. *The Jews in the Greek Age*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988.

Billings, Thomas Henry. *The Platonism of Philo Judaeus*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1919.

Boadt, Lawrence. *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction*. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.

Borgen, Peder. *Early Christianity and Hellenistic Judaism*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996.

Borgen, Peder, and Soren Giversen, eds. *The New Testament and Hellenistic Judaism*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997.

Charlesworth, James H., ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983-1985.

Charlesworth, James H., and Loren L. Johns, eds. *Hillel and Jesus: Comparative Studies of Two Major Religious Leaders*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997.

Cohen, Shaye J. D. "Adolph Harnack's 'The Mission and Expansion of Judaism': Christianity Succeeds Where Judaism Fails," Pages 163-69 in *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester*. Edited by Birger A. Pearson et al. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.

---. *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987.

Collins, A. Yarbro. "Aristobulus: A New Translation and Introduction." Pages 2:831-42 in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983-1985.

Collins, John J. "Artapanus: A New Translation and Introduction." Pages 2:889-903 in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983-1985.

---. *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

---. *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997.

---. "The Root of Immortality: Death in the Context of Jewish Wisdom." *Harvard Theological Review* 71:3-4 (1980): 177-92.

Collins, John J., and Gregory Sterling, eds. *Hellenism in the Land of Israel*. Vol. 13 of Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity Series. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001.

Conzelmann, Hans. *Gentiles, Jews, Christians: Polemics and Apologetics in the Greco-Roman Era*. Translated by M. Eugene Boring. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

Davies, W. D., and Louis Finkelstein, eds. *The Cambridge History of Judaism: The Hellenistic Age*. Vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

De Troyer, Kristin. *The End of the Alpha Text of Esther: Translation and Narrative Technique in MT 8:1-17, LXX 8:1-17, and AT 7:14-41*. Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 48. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000.

Elliott, Mark W. *The Song of Songs and Christology in the Early Church, 381-451*. Tübingen: Mort Siebeck, 2000.

- Fallon, F. "Eupolemus: A New Translation and Introduction." Pages 2:861-72 in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983-1985.
- Fox, Michael V. *Proverbs 1-9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 18A. New York: Doubleday, 2000.
- Frerichs, Ernest S., and Jacob Neusner, eds. *Goodenough on the History of Religion and on Judaism*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986.
- Freyne, Sean. *Galilee and Gospel: Collected Essays*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000.
- Ginzberg, Louis. *The Legends of the Jews*. Translated by Henrietta Szold. 1909-1938. 7 vols. Repr., Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.
- Goodenough, Erwin R. *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, 13 vols. Bollingen Series 37. New York: Pantheon, 1953-68.
- Grant, Frederick C. *Roman Hellenism and the New Testament*. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1962.
- Green, William Scott. *Approaches to Ancient Judaism: Studies in Judaism and its Greco-Roman Content*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985.
- Greenspahn, Frederick E., Earle Hilgert, and Burton L. Mack, eds. *Nourished with Peace: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism in Memory of Samuel Sandmel*. Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984.
- Gundry, Robert H. "The Language Milieu of First-Century Palestine: Its Bearing on the Authenticity of the Gospel Tradition." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 83 (1964): 404-408.
- Hadas, Moses, ed. and trans. *The Third and Fourth Books of Maccabees*. New York: Harper, published for Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1953.
- Hatch, Edwin. *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*. 5th ed. 1895. Repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1995.

- Hengel, Martin. *The Hellenization of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*. Philadelphia: Trinity, 1989.
- . *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*. Translated by John Bowden. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974.
- Holladay, Carl R., compiler and translator. *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*, Vol. 1: *Historians*. Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983.
- Horine, Steven. *Interpretive Images in the Song of Songs: From Wedding Chariots to Bridal Chambers*. New York: Peter Lang, 2001.
- Horsley, Richard A. *Archaeology, History, and Society in Galilee: The Social Context of Jesus and the Rabbis*. Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity, 1996.
- Kasher, Aryeh, Aharon Oppenheimer, and U. Rappaport, eds. *Synagogues in Antiquity*. Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1987.
- Kee, Howard Clark, and Lynn H. Cohick, eds. *Evolution of the Synagogue: Problems and Progress*. Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 1999.
- Kennedy, H. A. A. *Philo's Contribution to Religion*. New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1919.
- Knox, Wilfred L. *Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity*. London: Published for the British Academy by Humphrey Milford; Oxford University Press, 1944.
- Koester, Helmut. *History, Culture and Religion of the Hellenistic Age*. Vol. 1. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1982.
- Kraft, Robert A., and George W. E. Nickelsburg, eds. *Early Judaism and its Modern Interpreters*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986.
- Lattke, Michael. "On the Jewish Background of the Synoptic Concept 'The Kingdom of God.'" Pages 72-91 in *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus*. Edited by Bruce Chilton. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.
- Leonhardt, Jutta. *Jewish Worship in Philo of Alexandria*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001.

- Levine, Lee I., *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- . ed. *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992.
- . *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence?* Peabody Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998.
- Mack, Burton L. *A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988.
- . "Wisdom and Apocalyptic in Philo." Pages 21-39 in *Heirs of the Septuagint: Philo, Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity*. Vol. 3 of *The Studia Philonica Annual*, Edited by David Runia, et al. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991.
- . *Wisdom and the Hebrew Epic: Ben Sira's Hymn in Praise of the Fathers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.
- Malley, William J. *Hellenism and Christianity: The Conflict between Hellenic and Christian Wisdom in the Contra Galilaeos of Julian the Apostate and the Contra Julianum of St. Cyril of Alexandria*. Rome: Universita Gregoriana Editrice, 1978.
- Martin, Luther H. *Hellenistic Religions: An Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- McKay, Heather A. *Sabbath and Synagogue: The Question of Sabbath Worship in Ancient Judaism*. Boston: Brill Academic, 2001.
- McKnight, Scot. *A Light Among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.
- Meyers, Eric M., ed. *Galilee through the Centuries: Confluence of Cultures*. Duke Judaic Studies Series 1. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1999.
- . "Roman Sepphoris in the Light of New Archaeological Evidence and Research." Pages 321-38 in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*. Edited by Lee Levine. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992.
- Nagy, Rebecca Martin, Carol L. Meyers, Eric M. Meyers, and Zeev Weiss, eds. *Sepphoris in Galilee: Crosscurrents of Culture*. Raleigh: North Carolina Museum of Art; Distributed by Eisenbrauns, 1996.

Neusner, Jacob. *The Initial Phases of the Talmud's Judaism: Vol. 4: Theology*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995.

Neusner, Jacob and Alan J. Avery-Peck, eds. *Judaism in Late Antiquity: Part Three: Where We Stand: Issues and Debates in Ancient Judaism: Volume Four: The Special Problem of the Synagogue*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Pearson, Birger A. *Gnosticism, Judaism, and Egyptian Christianity*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.

Prager, Dennis, and Joseph Telushkin. *Why the Jews? The Reason for Antisemitism*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983.

Priest, J. "Testament of Moses: A New Translation and Introduction." Pages 1.918-34 in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983-1985.

Randall, John Herman, Jr. *Hellenistic Ways of Deliverance and the Making of the Christian Synthesis*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1970.

Reed, Jonathan L. *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-examination of the Evidence*. Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2000.

Reese, James M. *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and its Consequences*. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970.

Reider, Joseph, trans. *The Book of Wisdom: An English Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Harper; published for Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1957.

Renehan, Robert. "The Greek Philosophical Background of Fourth Maccabees." *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 115 (1972): 223-38.

Runia, David T. *Philo and the Church Fathers: A Collection of Papers*. Leiden: Brill, 1995.

—. "Was Philo a Middle Platonist? A Difficult Question Revisited." Pages 112-40 in *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*. Vol. 5 of *Studia Philonica Annual*. Edited by David T. Runia. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993.

Runia, David T., David M. Hay, and David Winston, eds. *Heirs of the Septuagint*. Vol. 3. of *The Studia Philonica Annual*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991.

- Safrai, Shmuel, ed. *The Literature of the Sages: First Part: Oral Tora, Halakha, Mishnah, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987.
- Safrai, Shmuel, and Menahem Stern, eds. *The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974-1976.
- Sandmel, Samuel. *Judaism and Christian Beginnings*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- . *Philo's Place in Judaism: A Study of Conceptions of Abraham in Jewish Literature*. 1956. Augmented ed. and repr., New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1971.
- . *Two Living Traditions: Essays on Religion and the Bible*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1971.
- Sawiki, Marianne. *Crossing Galilee: Architectures of Contact in the Occupied Land of Jesus*. Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2000.
- Segal, Alan F. *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism*. Leiden: Brill, 1977.
- Sevenster, Jan Nicolaas. *Do You Know Greek? How Much Greek Could the First Christians Have Known?* Leiden: Brill, 1968.
- Shutt, R. J. H. "Letter of Aristeas: A New Translation and Introduction." Pages 2:7-34 in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983-1985.
- Sterling, Gregory E., ed. *The Ancestral Philosophy: Hellenistic Philosophy in Second Temple Judaism: Essays of David Winston*. Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2001.
- . "Platonizing Moses: Philo and Middle Platonism." Pages 96-111 in *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*. Vol. 5 of *Studia Philonica Annual*. Edited by David T. Runia. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993.
- Stone, Michael E., ed. *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.

- Strange, James F. "Some Implications of Archaeology for New Testament Studies." Pages 23-59 in *What has Archaeology to Do with Faith?* Edited by James Charlesworth and Walter Weaver. Philadelphia: Trinity, 1992.
- Talmon, Shemaryahu, ed. *Jewish Civilization in the Hellenistic-Roman Period*. Philadelphia: Trinity, 1991.
- Tcherikover, Victor. *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*. Translated by S. Appelbaum. 1959. Repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999.
- Tobin, Thomas H. "Was Philo a Middle Platonist? Some Suggestions." Pages 147-50 in *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*. Vol. 5 of *Studia Philonica Annual*. Edited by David T. Runia. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993.
- Vermes, Geza. *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels*. 1973. Repr., Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.
- . *The Religion of Jesus the Jew*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.
- Walter, Nikolaus. "Der Thorausleger Aristobulus." *Texte und Untersuchungen* 86. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964.
- Whiston, William, trans. *The Works of Flavius Josephus*. 4 vols. 1738. Repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974.
- Williamson, Ronald. *Jews in the Hellenistic World: Philo*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- . *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Leiden: Brill, 1970.
- Winston, David. *Logos and Mystical Theology in Philo of Alexandria*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1985.
- . "Philo and the Hellenistic Jewish Encounter." Pages 124-142 in *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*. Vol. 7 of *Studia Philonica Annual*. Edited by David T. Runia. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995.
- . *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 43. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1979.
- Winter, Bruce W. *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Wise, Michael, Martin Abegg, Jr., and Edward Cook, trans. *Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.

Wolfson, Harry Austryn. *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947.

Yonge, C. D., trans. *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*. Foreword by David M. Scholer. Rev. ed. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993.

Soul-Oriented Theology

Boyd, Jeffrey H. *Reclaiming the Soul: The Search for Meaning in a Self-Centered Culture*. Cleveland: Pilgrim, 1996.

Bremmer, Jan N. *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.

Brown, Warren S., Nancey Murphy, and H. Newton Malony, eds. *Whatever Happened to the Soul? Scientific and Theological Portraits of Human Nature*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998.

Calvin, John. *Tracts and Treatises: In Defense of the Reformed Faith*. Translated by Henry Beveridge. Vol. 3. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958.

Clark, Elizabeth A. *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Claus, David B. *Toward the Soul: An Inquiry into the Meaning of ψυχή before Plato*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.

Colledge, Edmund, and Bernard McGinn, trans. *Meister Eckhart: The Essential Sermons, Commentaries, Treatises, and Defense*. New York: Paulist Press, 1981.

Cooper, John W. *Body, Soul and Life Everlasting: Biblical Anthropology and the Monism-Dualism Debate*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.

Crick, Francis. *The Astonishing Hypothesis: The Scientific Search for the Soul*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994.

Crouzel, Henri. *Origen*. Translated by A. S. Worrall. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989.

Griffin, David Ray. *God and Religion in the Postmodern World: Essays in Postmodern Theology*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.

Gueroult, Martial. *Descartes' Philosophy Interpreted According to the Order of Reasons*. Vol. 2: *The Soul and the Body*. Translated by Roger Ariew and Alan Donagan. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985.

Jacob, Alexander, ed. *Henry More: The Immortality of the Soul*. Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987.

John Paul II. *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*. Edited by Vittorio Messori. New York: Knopf, 1994.

Macrobius. *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, Translated by William Harris Stahl with intro. and notes. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.

Meecham, Henry G., trans. *The Epistle to Diognetus: The Greek Text with Introduction, Translation and Notes*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1949.

Origen. *On First Principles*. Translated by G. W. Butterworth. Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973.

Partee, Charles. "The Soul in Plato, Platonism, and Calvin." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 22 (1969): 278-95.

Porter, Frank Chamberlin. "The Pre-existence of the Soul in the Book of Wisdom and in the Rabbinical Writings." *American Journal of Theology* 12 (1908): 53-115.

Reis, David M. "The Journey of the Soul: Its Expressions in Early Christianity." Ph.D. diss., Claremont Graduate University, 1999.

Riley, Gregory J. *One Jesus, Many Christs: How Jesus Inspired Not One True Christianity but Many*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997.

—. *Resurrection Reconsidered: Thomas and John in Controversy*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.

Rollins, Wayne. *Soul and Psyche: The Bible in Psychological Perspective*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999.

Roth, Catharine P. "Platonic and Pauline Elements in the Ascent of the Soul in Gregory of Nyssa's Dialogue on the Soul and Resurrection." *Vigilae Christianae* 46 (1992): 20-30.

Swinburne, Richard. *The Evolution of the Soul*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1986.

Socratic/Platonic Thought and Theology

Betz, Hans Dieter, ed. *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Bigg, Charles. *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*. 1913. Repr., Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 2001.

Brickhouse, Thomas C., and Nicholas D. Smith. *Socrates on Trial*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.

Burkert, Walter. *Greek Religion*. Translated by John Raffan. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985.

---. *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*. Translated by Edwin L. Minar, Jr. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972.

Caird, Edward. *The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers*. Vol. 1 of *The Gifford Lectures 1900-2*. Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1904.

Chadwick, Henry, trans. *Saint Augustine: Confessions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

---. *The Sentences of Sextus: A Contribution to the History of Early Christian Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959.

Cooper, John M., ed. *Complete Works: Plato*. Assoc. ed. D. S. Hutchinson. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997.

Cornford, Francis Macdonald, trans. *Plato's Cosmology: The Timaeus of Plato Translated with a Running Commentary*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1937.

Crombie, I. M. *An Examination of Plato's Doctrines: Plato on Man and Society*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.

- Dillon, John, and Jackson Hershbell, trans. *Iamblichus: On the Pythagorean Way of Life: Text, Translation, and Notes*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991.
- Fine, Gail, ed. *Plato 2: Ethics, Politics, Religion, and the Soul*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Friedländer, Paul. *Plato: An Introduction*. Translated by Hans Meyerhoff. Vol. 1. 2nd rev. ed. Bollingen Series 59. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.
- Gooch, Paul W. *Reflections on Jesus and Socrates: Word and Silence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.
- Goodenough, Erwin R. *By Light, Light: The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935.
- Gottschalk, H. B. *Heraclides of Pontus*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1980.
- Greene, William Chase. "Platonism and its Critics." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 61 (1953): 39-71.
- Grube, G. M. A., trans. "Phaedo." Pages 49-100 in *Complete Works: Plato*. Edited by John M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997.
- Grube, G. M. A. and C. D. C. Reeve, trans. "Republic." Pages 971-1223 in *Complete Works: Plato*. Edited by John M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997.
- Gulley, Norman. *The Philosophy of Socrates*. New York: St. Martin's, 1968.
- Guthrie, Kenneth Sylvan, comp. and trans. *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*. Edited by David Fideler. Grand Rapids: Phanes Press, 1987.
- Guthrie, W. K. C. "Plato's Views on the Nature of the Soul." Pages 3-19 in *Recherches sur la Tradition Platonicienne*. Vandoeuvres: Fondation Hardt pour l'Étude de l'Antiquité Classique, 1955.
- Hadas, Moses. *Hellenistic Culture: Fusion and Diffusion*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.
- Hanfmann, George M. A. "Socrates and Christ." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Volume 60 (1951): 205-33.

- Jackson, Howard M. *The Lion Becomes Man: The Gnostic Leontomorphic Creator and the Platonic Tradition*. Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1985.
- Jaeger, Werner. "The Greek Ideas of Immortality." *Harvard Theological Review* 52 (July 1959): 135-47.
- Kahn, Charles H. *Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans: A Brief History*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2001.
- Kirk, G. S., J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield. *The Presocratic Philosophers*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- McPherran, Mark L. *The Religion of Socrates*. University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996.
- More, Paul Elmer. *Platonism*. Princeton : 3rd ed. Princeton University Press, 1931.
- . *The Religion of Plato*. Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1921.
- Nails, Debra. *Agora, Academy, and the Conduct of Philosophy*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1995.
- Nehamas, Alexander. *Virtues of Authenticity: Essays on Plato and Socrates*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Nilsson, Martin P. "Early Orphism and Kindred Religious Movements." *Harvard Theological Review* 28 (1935): 181-230.
- Patterson, Robert Leet. *Plato on Immortality*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965.
- Perseus 2.0: Interactive Sources and Studies on Ancient Greece*. CD-ROM. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Priestly, Joseph. *Jesus and Socrates Compared*. 1800. Repr., Kila, Montana: Kessinger Reproductions, n.d.
- Ranasinghe, Nalin. *The Soul of Socrates*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000.
- Robinson, Thomas More. *Plato's Psychology*, 2nd ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995.

Santas, Gerasimos Xenophon. *Socrates: Philosophy in Plato's Early Dialogues*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979.

Saunders, Trevor J., trans. "Laws." Pages 1318-1616 in *Complete Works: Plato*. Edited by John M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997.

Shorey, Paul. *The Unity of Plato's Thought*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1903.

---. *What Plato Said*. Abridged ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933.

Smith, Nicholas D., trans. "Theages." Pages 627-38 in *Complete Works: Plato*. Edited by John M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997.

Solmsen, Friedrich. *Plato's Theology*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1942. Repr. New York: Johnson Reprint, 1967.

Stewart, John Alexander, trans. *The Myths of Plato*. London: Macmillan, 1905.

Van Der Horst, Pieter. "Plato's Fear as a Topic in Early Christian Apologetics." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6 (Spring 1998): 1-13.

Vlastos, Gregory. *Plato's Universe*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975.

---. *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991.

Vogel, Cornelia J. de. *Pythagoras and Early Pythagoreanism: An Interpretation of Neglected Evidence on the Philosopher Pythagoras*. Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1966.

Wenley, Robert M. *Socrates and Christ: A Study in the Philosophy of Religion*. Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1889.

Wheelwright, Philip. *Heraclitus*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959.

White, Nicholas P., trans. "Sophist." Pages 235-93 in *Complete Works: Plato*. Edited by John M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997.

Zeyl, Donald J., trans. "Timaeus." Pages 1224-91 in *Complete Works: Plato*. Edited by John M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997.

Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism

Alcinous. *The Handbook of Platonism*. Translated by John Dillon. Oxford: Clarendon, 1993.

Berchman, Robert M. *From Philo to Origen: Middle Platonism in Transition*. Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984.

Betz, Hans Dieter, ed. *Plutarch's Theological Writings and Early Christian Literature*. Leiden: Brill, 1975.

Blumenthal, H.J., and R. A. Markus, eds. *Neoplatonism and Early Christian Thought: Essays in Honor of A. H. Armstrong*. London: Variorum, 1981.

Chadwick, Henry. *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966.

Dillon, John M. *The Golden Chain: Studies in the Development of Platonism and Christianity*. Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate Variorum, 1990.

---. *The Great Tradition: Further Studies in the Development of Platonism and Early Christianity*. Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate Variorum, 1997.

---. *The Middle Platonists: 80 B.C. to A.D. 220*. Rev. ed. Bristol, England: Booksprint, 1996.

Ellens, J. Harold. *The Ancient Library of Alexandria and Early Christian Theological Development*. Occasional Paper No. 27. Claremont: Institute for Antiquity & Christianity, 1993.

Ficino, Marsilio. *Platonic Theology*, Vol. 1, bks.1-4. English trans. and ed. of 1480 original by Michael J. B. Allen and John Warden. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Finan, Thomas, and Vincent Twomey, eds. *The Relationship between Neoplatonism and Christianity*. Kill Lane, Blackrock, Co. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1992.

- Grese, William C., trans. *Corpus Hermeticum XIII and Early Christian Literature*. Leiden: Brill, 1979.
- Hoffman, R. Joseph, ed. and trans. *Porphyry's Against the Christians: The Literary Remains*. Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus, 1994.
- Jones, Roger Miller. "The Ideas as the Thoughts of God." *Classical Philology* 21 (1926): 317-26.
- O'Meara, Dominic J., ed. *Neoplatonism and Christian Thought*. Studies in Neoplatonism 3. Norfolk, Va.: International Society for Neoplatonic Studies; distributed by State University of New York Press, 1982.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *What Has Athens to Do with Jerusalem?* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997.
- Quinn, Patrick. *Aquinas, Platonism and the Knowledge of God*. Aldershot, Hants, England: Avebury, 1996.
- Siorvanes, Lucas. *Proclus: Neo-Platonic Philosophy and Science*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.
- Tarrant, Harold. *Thrasyllan Platonism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993.
- Thesleff, Holger. *An Introduction to the Pythagorean Writings of the Hellenistic Period*. Abo, Finland: Abo Akademi, 1961.
- . *The Pythagorean Texts of the Hellenistic Period*. Abo, Finland: Abo Akademi, 1965.

INDEX A

INDEX OF MODERN AUTHORS

Barnard, Leslie W.	5n
Batey, Richard A.	265n
Beasley-Murray, George R.	15n, 18, 18n, 207n
Berchman, Robert	197, 198n
Betz, Hans Dieter	45n
Boadt, Lawrence	190n
Borgen, Peder	214, 214n
Brickhouse, Thomas C.	149n
Broek, Roelof van den	44n, 224n
Bultmann, Rudolf	207n
Burkert, Walter	140n, 183, 183n, 187, 187n, 188, 188n, 225n
Cadoux, Cecil J.	20
Chadwick, Henry	8n, 11n, 31n, 47n, 224n
Charlesworth, James H.	3n, 11n, 16n, 68n, 69n, 231n, 232n, 233n, 235n, 236n, 237n, 239n, 240n, 264n
Chilton, Bruce	19n
Claus, David B.	86n, 96n
Cohen, Shayne	258, 258n
Cohick, Lynn H.	83n
Colledge, Edmund	39n
Collins, A. Yarbro	68n, 69n, 235n, 236n, 237n
Collins, John J.	30n, 58n, 66, 67n, 68n, 71n, 72n, 231n, 233n, 235n, 259n, 260n
Conzelmann, Hans	71n, 227, 227n, 228, 228n, 229, 229n, 230, 230n, 232, 232n, 234, 234n, 238, 238n, 240, 242, 242n, 248, 249n, 256, 256n, 260
Cook, John G.	5, 5n, 76n
Cooper, John	111n, 114n, 120n, 124n, 145n, 157n, 161n
Cornford, Francis M.	86n
Crombie, I. M.	86n, 92n
Crossan, John D.	21, 22, 22n, 49n, 268, 268n, 283, 283n, 284, 285n, 296, 296n, 299, 300n, 301, 301n, 306, 306n, 311, 313, 315, 315n, 316, 316n, 318, 318n, 319n, 323, 323n, 331, 331n
Dalman, Gustaf	15, 15n, 16, 16n, 19
Daniélou, Jean	91n

De Troyer, Kristin	231n
Dillon, John	70n, 99n, 175, 176, 176n, 178n, 179n, 181n, 182n, 183n, 188n, 190n, 191, 191n, 192n, 193, 193n, 194, 194n, 195, 195n, 196n, 197, 197n, 207, 207n
Dodd, C. H.	2n, 20, 52, 52n, 53, 53n, 208, 208n, 267, 268n, 276n, 280, 280n, 282, 282n, 288, 288n, 289, 291, 292n, 293, 293n, 295, 295n, 299, 299n, 306, 306n, 310, 311n, 313, 313n, 315, 315n, 318, 318n, 322, 323n, 325, 325n, 331, 331n
Fallon, F.	232n
Fideler, David	71n, 182n, 184n, 190n
Fine, Gail	86n
France, Richard T.	279n
Freyne, Sean	243n
Friedländer, Paul	103n, 104n, 137n
Funk, Robert	267n, 293, 293n, 301, 301n
Gooch, Paul	88n
Goodenough, Erwin R.	81n, 251, 251n
Grant, Frederick	7n, 11, 11n, 121n, 138n, 147n
Grant, Robert	44n, 304n
Grese, William C.	69n, 223n
Griffin, David Ray	123n
Grube, G. M. A.	124n, 145n, 157n
Gulley, Norman	166n
Guthrie, Kenneth S.	71n, 182n, 184n, 190n
Guthrie, W. K. C.	122, 122n
Hadas, Moses	38n, 76n, 196n, 237, 237n, 246, 247n, 248, 248n
Harnack, Adolf von	20, 50, 50n, 52, 258n
Hengel, Martin	56, 56n, 57n, 58n, 59n, 60n, 62, 62n, 63n, 66n, 76, 76n, 260, 260n, 269n
Hershbell, Jackson	181n, 182n, 183n, 188n, 190n
Holte, Ragnar	5n, 309, 310, 310n
Horsley, Richard	75n, 82n, 264, 265n
Hultgren, Arland J.	25n, 36n, 40n, 41n, 44n, 277, 279, 279n, 280, 280n, 286, 286n, 289, 289n, 293, 294n, 296, 296n, 297, 297n, 300, 300n, 301, 302n, 306, 307n, 311, 313, 314, 314n, 315, 315n, 316, 317n, 318, 318n, 319, 319n, 323, 323n, 325, 325n, 327, 327n, 331, 331n
Jackson, Howard	142n
Jaeger, Werner	166n, 167n

Jeremias, Joachim	52, 52n, 267, 267n, 276, 276n, 279, 279n, 282, 282n, 284, 284n, 288, 288n, 291, 291n, 283, 293n, 295, 295n, 297, 297n, 299, 299n, 301, 301n, 305, 305n, 306, 306n, 310, 310n, 313, 313n, 315, 315n, 316, 316n, 317, 318n, 321, 321n, 322, 322n, 324, 325n, 326, 327n, 330, 331n.
John Paul II	6, 6n
Jones, Roger Miller	99, 100n
Jülicher, Adolf	21, 274, 274n, 276
Kahn, Charles H.	188, 188n, 189n, 191n
Kee, Howard Clark	83n
Kennedy, H. A. A.	66n, 222n
King, Karen	285n
Kirk, G. S.	96n, 103n, 110n, 181n
Lattke, Michael	19n
Leonhardt, Jutta	250, 250n, 252n
Levine, Lee I.	253n, 264n
Longenecker, Richard N.	279n
Lundström, Gösta	20, 20n, 21n
Mack, Burton L.	2n, 21, 22, 22n, 164n, 212n, 251, 252n, 285n, 307n
Martin, Luther H.	223n
McGinn, Bernard	39n
McKay, Heather	253n
McKenzie, John	290, 290n
McKnight, Scot	227n, 228
McPherran, Mark	86n, 108n, 165n, 166n
Meier, John	77, 77n, 78, 78n, 79n
Meyers, Eric	264, 264n
More, Paul E.	86n, 94n, 102n, 107n, 109n, 116, 116n
Nagy, Rebecca	265n
Nehamas, Alexander	103n, 150n, 151, 151n
Nilsson, Martin P.	28n
Oulton, John E. L.	8n, 31n, 47n
Patterson, Robert L.	135n
Pearson, Birger A.	258n
Perkins, Pheme	282, 282n, 284, 285n
Perrin, Norman	15n, 19, 20, 21, 277, 277n, 279, 279n, 280, 280n, 282, 282n, 284, 284n, 288, 288n, 289, 291, 291n, 293, 293n, 295, 295n, 301, 301n, 306, 306n, 325, 325n
Priestly, Joseph	88n
Ranasinghe, Nalin	86n

Raven, J. E.	96n, 103n, 110n, 181n
Reed, Jonathan	261, 261n, 262n, 263, 263n, 264n, 265, 265n
Reese, James M.	72, 73, 73n, 245, 245n, 246
Reeve, C. D. C.	145n, 157n
Reider, Joseph	242n, 245, 245n
Riley, Gregory J.	7, 7n, 120n, 327, 327n
Robbins, Vernon K.	28n, 78n, 88n, 307n
Robinson, James M.	52n
Robinson, Thomas More	86n, 114n, 130n
Rudolph, Kurt	112n
Runia, David	196n, 197, 197n
Sanders, E. P.	17n, 265n
Sandmel, Samuel	76, 76n, 196, 196n
Saucy, Mark	16, 16n, 20, 20n, 21n
Saunders, Trevor J.	120n, 161n
Schofield, M.	96n, 103n, 110n, 181n
Schweitzer, Albert	17, 18n, 20, 21, 47, 47n, 52, 52n
Scott, Bernard Brandon	21, 267n
Sevenster, Jan N.	75, 75n
Shorey, Paul	86n, 100n, 104n
Shutt, R. J. H.	3n, 239, 239n, 240n
Siorvanes, Lucas	180n
Smith, Nicholas D.	149n, 161n
Solmsen, Friedrich	86n, 113n, 118n
Sterling, Gregory E.	68n, 154n, 196n, 199, 199n
Stewart, John Alexander	166n
Stone, Michael E.	57n
Strange, James F.	264, 264n
Tcherikover, Victor	60, 61, 61n, 77n, 229
Thesleff, Holger	187, 187n, 225n
Turner, John D.	86n
Vermes, Geza	15n, 287n, 294, 294n, 303n
Vlastos, Gregory	38n, 86n, 120n
Walter, Nikolaus	238n
Weaver, Walter P.	3n, 11n, 16n, 68n, 69n, 231n, 232n, 233n, 235n, 236n, 237n, 239n, 240n, 264n
Wenley, Robert M.	88n
Wheelwright, Phillip	161n
Whiston, William	244n
White, Nicholas	111n
Williamson, Ronald	203, 204n, 205n, 206n, 207n, 208, 209, 209n, 219, 219n, 220, 220n, 249n

Winston, David	16n, 67, 68n, 199n, 200, 200n, 206n, 238n, 240, 240n, 241, 241n, 242, 242n, 247, 247n, 251, 251n, 304, 304n
Winter, Bruce	252n
Witherington, Ben III	269n
Yonge, C. D.	65n
Young, Brad	276, 277n, 278, 282, 283n, 285, 285n, 288, 289n, 292, 292n, 295, 295n, 297, 297n, 299n, 300, 300n, 306, 306n, 311, 311n, 318, 318n, 319, 319n, 323, 323n, 331, 331n
Zeyl, Donald J.	114n

INDEX B

CITATIONS OF SCRIPTURE AND ANCIENT TEXTS

Old Testament

Genesis	2:9, 215n 7:1-4, 200 7:6, 200 7:1-5, 201 17:15-22, 201 17:20, 64n 18:1, 34n 26:1-6, 200 26:2, 34n 28:10-22, 201 32:24, 34n 32:30, 34n 41:45, 43n
Exodus	6:3, 34n 15:18, 15 16:4, 39n 16:15, 213 22:25, 320n
Deuteronomy	10:9, 210 30:14, 30
Judges	6:22, 34
2 Kings	4:1, 285
1 Chronicles	28:5, 17
Nehemiah	5:1-13, 320n
Esther	8:1-17, 231
Job	28, 58
Psalms	64:9-10, 215n 93:1, 17 1-9, 58, 58n 2:22-23, 324 8:22-31, 58n 9:1-6, 223n 28:8, 320n
Song of Songs	3:2, 223n 3:11, 223n
Isaiah	29:18-20, 172n 35:5-6, 172 56-66, 190

Isaiah (cont.) 61:1, 172n

Ezekiel 18:8-17, 320n

Amos 2:6, 285
8:6, 285**Old Testament Apocrypha**

2 Esdras	8:41, 36
4 Maccabees	2.23, 247, 247n 7:23, 247 14:2, 247, 248, 248n
Sirach	1:9-10, 59 1:19, 54 1:24, 54 11:18-19, 25, 276
Wisdom of Solomon	1-5, 242n 6:4, 16n 8:1, 223n 10:10, 16n, 212n 15:8, 40n

Old Testament Pseudepigrapha

<i>Aristobulus</i>	F4, 236n
<i>Artapanus</i>	F3, 233n
<i>1 Enoch</i>	97:8-10, 276n
<i>Eupolemus</i>	1.26, 232n 1.31, 232n 1.33, 232n
<i>Joseph and Aseneth</i>	19.3, 44n
<i>Letter of Aristeas</i>	2.10, 239n 2.22, 240n 2.22-24, 240n 2.26, 240n
<i>Psalms of Solomon</i>	17:3, 16
<i>Sibylline Oracles</i>	3.47-48, 16 3.767, 16

Testament of Abraham 8:3, 16n

Testament of Benjamin 9:1, 16n

Testament of Job 18:68, 296n

Testament of Moses 10:1, 16

Rabbinical Literature

Avot 1.3, 331n
2.9, 311n
5.12, 331n

Numbers Rabbah 7.4, 214n

Mekilta 14.5, 296n

Josephus

Against Apion 1.1, 256n
1.2, 70n
1.13-14, 186n
1.22, 70n
1.162-165, 186n,
256n
1.176-81, 229n,
256n
2.168-70, 229n,
257n
2.223-24, 257n
2.280-86, 229n
2.281-82, 257n

Jewish Antiquities 7.2-5, 45n
18.1, 78n
18.3, 78n
18.8, 250n
18.27, 263n
20.2.3-4, 259n
20.34-38, 72n

Jewish War 1.8.5, 265n
2.8.14, 78n
2.68-69, 266
3.31, 265n
3.8, 244n
7.3.3, 259n
7.8, 244n

The Life 2.11-12, 79n
2.22, 78n

Philo

Abraham (Abr.) 48-56, 34n

Abraham (cont.) 74-75, 210n
99, 253n
100-01, 223n, 224n
103, 212n
127, 209n
150, 209n
200, 65n
261, 22n, 209n

On Agriculture (Agr.) 50, 209n
51, 210n
96-97, 65n

*On the Cherubim
(Cher.)* 2, 329n

*On the Confusion
of Tongues (Conf.)* 72, 209n
146, 208
170, 205n
172, 206n

*On the Contemplative
Life (Contempl.)* 2, 254n
11-12, 254n
20-23, 254n
28-29, 254n
30-31, 252n

*On the Preliminary
Studies (Congr.)* 2, 221n
6, 221n
9-10, 221n
12, 221n
23, 221n
24, 273n
34-38, 34n
35, 273n
36, 221n, 273n
50, 3n
59, 222n
73-74, 273n
79, 196n
116, 3n, 211n
118, 212n
134-35, 210n
144, 196n
171, 215n

*On the Decalogue
(Decal.)* 13, 39n
96, 220n

98, 252n
105, 220n, 272n

<i>That the Worse Attacks the Better (Det.)</i>	22-23, 3n 147, 221n 148-49, 43n 149, 222n	<i>Leg. (cont.)</i>	3.197, 41n
<i>That God is Unchangeable (Deus)</i>	39-40, 217n 134-35, 220n 143, 3n, 212n 155, 215n 159-60, 3n, 212n	<i>On the Embassy to Gaius (Legat.)</i>	120, 228n 156, 252n 350, 249n
<i>On Drunkenness (Ebr.)</i>	82, 202n, 272n	<i>On the Migration of Abraham (Migr.)</i>	4-5, 211n 8-9, 3n, 209n, 212n 34-35, 272n 125, 34n 197, 3n, 209n, 211n 200, 273n 200-01, 202n
<i>Against Flaccus (Flacc.)</i>	43, 249n 55, 227n, 249n	<i>On the Life of Moses (Mos.)</i>	1.21-24, 70n 1.25, 46n 2.17, 259n 2.215-16, 252n 2.216, 253n, 255n
<i>On Flight and Finding Fug.)</i>	10, 3n, 210n, 212n 52, 216n 67, 215n 100-01, 3n, 210n 101, 205n 109, 205n 137-39, 214n, 215n 159, 304n 174, 216n 200-01, 185n	<i>On the Change of Names (Mut.)</i>	12, 34n 16-17, 202n 17, 3n, 211n 94, 43n 116, 43n 152, 3n, 22n, 209n, 212n 232, 216n 259, 216n
<i>On Giants (Gig.)</i>	45-46, 210n 60-61, 3n 63-64, 212n	<i>On the Creation of the World (Opif.)</i>	1-6, 94n 13, 206n 16, 206n 16-23, 205n, 206n 17-19, 202n 26, 206n 29, 206n 35, 206n 45, 206n 53, 206n 56-57, 206n 60, 206n 66-68, 206n 69-71, 3n 139, 3n, 210n, 220n 145-46, 3n, 210n 146, 220n
<i>Who is the Heir? (Her.)</i>	63-64, 220n 79, 216n 82-83, 329n 119, 220n 191, 216n 204, 217n 225, 123n 239, 218n		
<i>Hypothetica (Hypoth.)</i>	7.11-15, 252n, 255n 11.14-17, 146n		
<i>On the Life of Joseph (Jos.)</i>	151, 153n		
<i>Allegorical Interpretation (Leg.)</i>	1.246, 217n, 309n 1.48-49, 215n 1.56-57, 215n 1.98, 216n 2.19, 65n 3.81, 3n 3.115, 210n 3.161-63, 216n 3.162, 39n 3.163, 299n	<i>On Planting (Plant.)</i>	32-35, 65n 58, 3n, 210n 93, 216n 97-98, 217n 100, 217n 101, 218n 102, 293n 114, 217n

<i>On the Posterity of Cain (Post.)</i>	18, 218n 20, 218n 21, 219n 78-79, 222n 101-02, 196n 125, 37m 127-28, 3n, 209n, 211n, 215n 138, 285n 146, 285n	<i>On Dreams (cont.)</i>	2.127, 84n, 252n 2.171, 216n 2.234, 222n 2.237, 221n 2.243, 211n 2.243-44, 3n, 22n 2.244, 209n, 215n 2.245, 215n 2.249, 219n 2.272, 216n 2.292-94, 46n
<i>On Rewards and Punishments (Praem.)</i>	10-11, 43n, 215n 11-31, 273n 15, 302n, 304n 24-51, 34n 43-46, 152n 60, 217n 62, 218n 65, 312n 127, 217n 159-60, 216n 163, 210n 172, 216n	<i>On the Special Laws (Spec.)</i>	1.57, 22n 1.68-78, 251n 1.103, 148n 1.334, 212n 2.61-62, 252n 2.62, 84n 2.202, 215n 2.282, 72n 3.160-62, 243n 3.185, 214n 4.164, 212n
<i>That Every Good Person is Free (Prob.)</i>	81-82, 253n 88, 32n	<i>On the Virtues (Virt.)</i>	175-86, 271n 181, 287n 182, 302n 185-86, 291n
<i>On Providence (Prov.)</i>	2.19, 3n 2.22-23, 324n 2.64, 251n	New Testament	
<i>Questions & Answers on Exodus (QE)</i>	1.12, 123n 2.3, 303n 2.29, 208n	Matthew	3:2, 1n 4:17, 1n 4:19, 293n 4:23, 81n 5:1, 84n 5:3, 34n 5:17, 270n 5:19, 47n 5:44, 138n 5:45, 303n, 324n 6:11, 299n 6:19-21, 24n 6:25-34, 284n 6:28, 164n 6:33, 42n 7:2, 140n, 218n 7:6, 33n 7:13, 33n 7:21, 41n 8:11, 34n, 171n 8:21-22, 287n 9:18, 1n 9:35, 81n, 83n 10:6, 269n
<i>Questions & Answers on Genesis (QG)</i>	3.10, 154n 4.8, 28n, 34n, 140n 4.102, 39n 4.104, 285n		
<i>On the Sacrifices of Cain and Abel (Sacr.)</i>	5-7, 34n 8-10, 49n		
<i>On Dreams (Somn.)</i>	1.56, 196n 1.58, 196n 1.140, 212n 1.166-73, 34n 1.186, 206n 1.191, 209n, 210n 1.205, 196n 1.215, 208n 1.226, 209n 2.45, 3n 2.68, 278n 2.76-77, 216n		

Matthew (cont.)

10:7, 1n
 10:28, 25n
 11:4-6, 172n
 11:11, 47n
 11:12, 45n
 11:15, 29n
 12:9, 1n
 12:28, 45n, 225n
 12:38, 82n
 13:3-9, 307
 13:3-23, 36n, 37n
 13:10-12, 317
 13:11, 33n
 13:12, 39n
 13:13, 29n
 13:18, 307, 313
 13:19, 36n, 308
 13:24-30, 38n, 323
 13:24-43, 162n
 13:31-32, 38n, 312
 13:32, 164n
 13:33, 38n, 316
 13:36-43, 38n
 13:38, 36n
 13:44, 41n, 294
 13:45-46, 42n, 296
 13:47-48, 292
 13:47-50, 35n
 13:52, 45n, 48n,
 289
 13:54, 1n, 9n, 81n,
 352n
 15:1, 82n
 15:24, 269n
 16:6, 39n
 16:11-12, 39n
 16:19, 326n
 17:22, 84n
 18:2-10, 277
 18:3-4, 34n
 18:10, 34n
 18:12-14, 35n
 18:18, 326n
 18:22-35, 36n
 18:23-35, 283
 19:12, 34n, 278n
 19:14, 34n
 19:23-34, 34n, 279
 20:1-15, 44n
 20:1-16, 297
 21:28-32, 41n, 286
 21:31, 81n
 21:43, 39n
 22:1-10, 43n
 22:1-14, 280
 22:2-13, 35n

Matthew (cont.)

23:2, 82n
 23:4, 82n
 23:7, 82n
 23:9, 35n
 23:13, 48n, 82n
 23:13-14, 82n
 23:15, 259n
 24:32-36, 321
 25:1-13, 43n, 302
 25:14-30, 40n, 319
 25:34, 24n
 26:29, 28n
 26:55, 81n

Mark

1:15, 1n
 1:17, 293, 293n
 1:21, 1n, 81n, 252n
 1:21-29, 83n
 1:39, 81n
 2:15-16, 77n
 3:1, 1n
 3:6, 77n
 4:3-8, 37n
 4:3-20, 36n, 307
 4:8, 164n
 4:9, 29n
 4:10-11, 317
 4:11, 33n
 4:12, 29n
 4:14, 36n, 313
 4:23, 29n
 4:24, 140n, 218n
 4:25, 39n
 4:26-29, 38n, 314
 4:31-32, 38n, 312
 6:2, 1n, 9n, 81n,
 252n
 6:6, 83n
 6:34, 84n
 8:13, 83n
 9:1, 44n
 9:33-37, 277
 10:14-15, 34n
 10:23-25, 34n, 279
 11:18, 84n
 12:25, 52n
 12:29-31, 138n
 12:32-34, 36n
 12:35, 81n
 12:38, 84n
 13:3, 51n
 13:28-32, 321
 13:32-36, 153n
 14:25, 34n, 171n
 14:49, 81n, 84n

Mark (cont.)	15:43, 44n	Luke (cont.)	14:15, 34n, 171n 14:16-24, 35n, 280, 281 14:28-29, 34n 15:2, 291, 330n 15:4-7, 35n, 290 15:11-32, 327 15:17, 329n 16:16, 45n 16:19-31, 27n 16:27-31, 149n 17:20, 23, 23n 17:20-21, 30n 17:21, 24n 18:16-17, 34n 18:24-25, 34n, 279 18:29, 35n 19:11, 40n 19:11-27, 33n 19:12-27, 319 19:13-27, 40n 19:26, 317 19:47, 81n, 84n 20:1, 81n, 84n 21:23, 84n 21:29-30, 42n 21:29-33, 321 21:37, 81n, 84n 22:15, 82n 22:16, 43n, 171n 22:16-18, 34n 22:18, 171n 22:18-29, 28n 22:33, 84n 23:5, 83n 23:51, 44n 26:55, 84n
Luke	2:13, 153n 2:46, 80, 80n, 81 4:16, 1n 4:31-37, 83n 4:43, 1n 4:44, 81n 5:17, 82n 6:6, 1n, 140n, 252n 6:27, 138n 6:35, 138n 6:38, 218n 7:5, 83n 7:22-23, 172n 7:28, 47n 7:36-50, 77n 8:1, 1n 8:5-15, 36n, 37n, 307 8:9-10, 317 8:10, 29n, 33n 8:11, 36n, 313 8:15, 311 8:18, 39n, 317 9:2, 1n 9:11, 1n 9:27, 44n 9:39, 153n 9:46-48, 277 9:59-60, 287n 9:60, 1n 9:61-62, 287n 9:62, 41n 10:9, 45n 10:23-24, 29n 11:3, 299n 11:20, 45n, 228n 11:37, 48n, 77n 11:43, 82n 12:16-21, 25n 12:16-23, 275 12:22-32, 284n 12:32-34, 28n 12:33-34, 24n 12:37, 43n 12:52-53, 35n 13:6-9, 300 13:14, 33n 13:19, 38n, 312 13:20-21, 38n, 316 13:22, 83n 13:23, 80n 13:25, 43n, 302 13:28, 171n 14:1-24, 84n	John	1:1, 31n 1:1-12, 207n 1:14, 31n 3:1, 77n 3:3, 277 3:5, 277 3:7-15, 213n 4:2, 47n 4:38, 311 6:27-38, 213n 6:59, 1n, 81n, 252n 7:14, 81n 7:15, 9n 7:28, 81n 7:49, 270n 8:20, 81n 13:20, 277 14:23, 31n

John (cont.)	18:36, 23n
Acts	1:3, 1n 2:5-11, 75n 5:1-10, 288n 8:12, 1n 9:3, 153n 13:15, 253n 17:17, 81n 17:28-29, 127n 18:4, 81n 18:11, 81n 18:26, 81n 19:8, 1n, 81n 22:6, 153n 28:23, 1n 28:31, 1n, 81n
Romans	1:19-32, 29n 1:20, 29n 2:4, 302 6:4, 47 10:8, 30n 11:16, 316 14:17, 29n
1 Corinthians	1:23, 29n 2:2, 29n 3:6-7, 164n, 314n 3:9, 31n, 308n 3:10-12, 31n 4:5, 325n 11:2, 305n 12:4-11, 142n 13:12, 34n, 220n, 272n 14:4-25, 142n 15:35-38, 313 15:35-44, 311
2 Corinthians	4:18, 164n 9:10, 164n
Galatians	1:12, 29n
Philippians	2:7, 74n
Colossians	1:15-16, 30n 1:15-17, 54n
Hebrews	5:12, 164n 5:14, 164n 6:7-8, 309n
Revelation	22:4, 34n

New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

<i>Acts of John</i>	109, 297
<i>Acts of Peter</i>	20, 297
<i>Acts of Thomas</i>	113:104-05, 297
<i>Gospel of Thomas</i>	9, 36n 20, 38n, 312 22, 278n 57, 162n 61, 325n 64, 35n, 281, 283 76, 42n 96, 38n 97, 285, 290-92 98, 325 102, 82n 107, 35n 113, 24n 114, 278n

Greek and Roman Authors

Apollonius of Rhodes

<i>Argonautica</i>	1.23-35, 234n
--------------------	---------------

Aristotle

<i>Metaphysics</i>	987A, 183n 987B, 183n 988A, 183n 1071B-1072B, 109n 1074B, 95n, 99n
--------------------	--

<i>On the Soul</i> (<i>De. an.</i>)	407B, 170n
--	------------

<i>Rhetoric</i>	2.20-22, 274n
-----------------	---------------

<i>Nichomachaen Ethics</i>	1179B, 309n
----------------------------	-------------

Cicero

<i>Academicae</i>	1.35, 179n
<i>Quaestiones</i>	2.136, 14n

<i>Academica priora</i>	2.12, 193n
-------------------------	------------

<i>De Finibus</i>	4.2, 179n 5.1, 192n 5.6, 192n 5.14, 193n
-------------------	---

<i>De Finibus</i> (cont.)	5.15.43, 272n, 309n 5.21.59-60, 309n 5.87, 183n		26A, 143n 31D, 149n 32D, 149n 40A-B, 149n 40C, 137n, 170n 40E-41C, 166n 41A-B, 170n
<i>De Legibus</i>	1.22.58-59, 276n	<i>Apology</i> (cont.)	
<i>De Republica</i>	1.10, 193n	<i>Charmides</i>	157B, 125n
<i>Tusculanae Disputationes</i>	5.10, 183n	<i>Cratylus</i>	385E-386C, 138n 389C, 97n 390C, 5n 400A, 155n 400A-B, 110n 400C, 126n, 167n 404A, 155n 407E-408B, 105n 439D-E, 98n 439E, 105n
Corpus Hermeticum	1.9, 223n 13.2, 223n 13.5, 223n		
Diogenes Laertius			
<i>Lives</i>	1.12-15, 182n 1.19, 181n 1.40, 181n 1.41, 234n 1.42, 181n 2.19, 181n 2.22, 126n 2.32, 126n 3.9, 188n 7.2-3, 190n 8.8, 181n 8.15, 188n 8.24, 181n	<i>Critias</i>	120E-121C, 173n
		<i>Crito</i>	47D-E, 125n 48A, 123n 49B-E, 5n, 76n 54B, 166n
Iamblichus		<i>Epistulae (Letters)</i>	2.312, 127n 2.312E, 3n, 5n 7.335A-B, 145n 7.335B-C, 137n, 170n 7.336B, 143n 7.338C-D, 183n 7.340C, 154n 7.340D-E, 155n 7.341C-D, 155n 7.341D, 153n 7.343E, 152n 7.344B, 5n 13.361B, 113n
<i>On the Pythagorean Way of Life</i>	4, 71n, 190n 5, 181n 27, 182n 31, 188n 33, 182n 36, 182n, 183n		
Plato			
<i>[Alcibiades Major]</i>	103A, 149n 117D, 143n 129E, 123n 130C-E, 123n 132D-133C, 108n 133C, 93n 147A, 144n	<i>[Eryxias]</i>	393C, 125n
		<i>Euthydemus</i>	272E, 149n 279A-B, 125n
<i>[Alcibiades 2]</i>	139B, 142n 141B, 142n 150D, 155n	<i>Euthyphro</i>	3B, 149n 4C, 156n
<i>Apology</i>	23D, 158n	<i>Gorgias</i>	451E, 125n 452A-B, 125n 466E-467A, 143n 486A-B, 159n 492E-493C, 126n

<i>Gorgias</i> (cont.)	493A, 96n, 285n 493B, 144n 521C, 159n 523E, 166n 524E-525A, 148n 525C-E, 166n 526E, 166n 527A, 166n 527E, 155n	<i>Leges</i> (cont.)	897B, 104n, 120n 897B-C, 103n 897C, 120n 898A, 118n 898B-C, 121n 898C, 141n 899B, 121n 899B-E, 110n 899D, 127n 899D-E, 97n 900-905, 92n 901D, 93n 900D-901E, 121n 902E-903A, 121n 903B, 121n 903B-D, 138n 904D, 166n 906C, 144n 919C, 168n 923A, 170n 927A, 166n 959B, 123n 961D, 161n 966D, 118n 967B, 103n, 118n 967D, 103n
<i>Ion</i>	534B-535A, 142n		
<i>Leges</i> (Laws)	631B-C, 125n 631C, 125n 676C-677B, 173n 661A, 125n 689A, 143n 689B, 119n, 141n 691C, 119n, 141n 716A, 155n 716B, 140n 727B-728A, 143n 728D-E, 125n 729B, 125n 731C, 143n 734B, 143n 743A, 76n, 279n 743B, 5n 759C, 156n 790C, 125n 790C-793E, 278n 791C, 125n 803A-B, 154n 808D, 155n 819D, 144n 821B-822C, 110n 860C, 143n 863B, 144n 863C, 143n 864B-C, 144n 864C-867C, 147n 865D, 156n 868A, 156n 870A, 144n 870E, 168n 873B, 148n 875C, 103n 881E, 156n 892A, 127n 892A-C, 111n 893B, 109n 894B, 102n 894B-C, 109n 895B, 102n 896A, 109n 896E-897A, 120n		
		<i>[Lovers]</i>	134B, 125n, 144n 134E, 161n 137B, 168n
		<i>Meno</i>	78A-B, 143n 80A, 158n 81A-B, 167n 81A-E, 169n 81B-C, 170n 81C, 134n 87E, 125n 99E, 155n
		<i>Phaedo</i>	64B, 126n 64C, 131n 64E, 156n 65D, 125n 65E-66E, 132n 66C, 144n 66D, 132n 66E, 126n 67A-E, 326n 67B-C, 154n 67C, 126n 67E, 124n 69C-D, 166n 70B-D, 133n 70C-72E, 137n 71C-72A, 133n

<i>Phaedo</i> (cont.)	73A, 103n	<i>Phaedrus</i> (cont.)	247C, 5n	
	73A-B, 132n		247C-D, 214n	
	73A-74A, 133n		247D, 100n, 163n	
	74A-75D, 132n		248B-C, 163n, 214n	
	74B-75C, 134n		248C, 168n	
	75D-76A, 134n		248C-E, 168n	
	76B, 103n		249A-B, 166n	
	77B-C, 134n		249D, 151n, 163n	
	78A, 155n		250B-D, 98n	
	78C-80B, 134n		250C, 126n	
	78D, 97n, 103n		250D-251A, 13n	
	79A, 97n		255D, 163n	
	79B, 92n, 123n,		257B, 156n	
	127n		265B, 142n	
	79C, 144n		276A, 158n	
	79D, 127n		276A-B, 161n	
	80A, 123n		276E-277A, 162n	
	81A, 135n			
	81B-82C, 135n	<i>Philebus</i>	26E-27A, 107n	
	81C, 145n		28C, 3n, 103n	
	81D, 135n		28C-31A, 107n	
	82A-D, 166n		29E-30E, 137n	
	82C, 125n		30A-31A, 110n	
	82D, 156n		30D, 14n, 93n,	
	83B, 156n		102n, 103n	
	83C, 144n		34B, 134n	
	84A-B, 214n		40C, 144n	
	87A, 135n		59B, 127n	
	92A-95A, 136n		65B, 127n	
	93B, 142n			
	93D, 138n		<i>Politicus</i>	259A-B, 3n
	94B, 123n			266C, 144n
	95D-E, 136n	269C-D, 173n		
	97B-98B, 110n	269D, 95n		
	99E, 104n, 132n	271A, 171n		
	105C-D, 131n	271B-C, 172n		
	105E, 131n	272E, 130n, 173n		
	107A, 137n, 170n	273A, 172n		
	107D, 28n, 163n	273B-C, 173n		
	108A, 155n	309C, 127n		
	110B, 136n	309C-E, 124n		
	113D-E, 166n			
	113E, 166n	<i>Parmenides</i>	137C, 92n, 93n	
	114C, 166n		142C, 93n	
			156D-E, 153n	
			164D, 153n	
<i>Phaedrus</i>	230A, 125n	<i>Protagoras</i>	312D, 5n	
	241C, 162n		313C, 214n	
	243A, 156n		313C-F, 163n	
	244A, 142n		345D-E, 143n	
	245C, 128n		358C, 143n	
	245C-D		361A-B, 155n	
	245C-246A, 118n			
	245E-246A, 128n			
	246A, 125n	<i>Respublica</i> (<i>Republic</i>)	329E-330A, 76n	
	246D-E, 214n		330D, 136n	
	246E, 46n, 129n			

Respublica (cont.)

330E, 148n
 361E-362A, 157n
 363D, 28n
 364E, 156n
 364E-365A, 167n
 379A, 95n
 379A-B, 93n
 380D, 95n, 98n
 380D-E, 105n
 381B-C, 95n
 381B-E, 95n
 382B, 143n, 144n
 382C, 141n
 382C-E, 119n
 382E, 95n, 141n,
 142n
 382E-383A, 95n
 401E, 163n
 402C, 34n, 271n
 403D, 126n
 427E, 34n, 271n
 433D-F, 136n
 439B, 124n
 442A, 144n
 457C-D, 35n, 146n
 461C-D, 35n, 146n
 461E, 146n
 467A, 101n
 478E, 98n
 479E, 98n, 152n
 481D, 162n
 490B, 127n, 162n,
 166n
 492A, 161n
 494A, 303n
 495E, 168n
 498D, 168n
 500B-C, 166n
 500C, 98n
 501D, 127n
 504C, 139n
 505E, 100n, 101n
 506E, 101n
 506E-507A, 118n
 508A-B, 92n
 508C, 116n
 508E, 101n
 509A, 101n
 509B, 93n, 101n,
 163n, 177n
 509D-E, 92n
 509D-510E, 156n
 514A-518D, 91n
 515A, 156n
 515C, 153n
 515D, 147n, 156n,

Respublica
(cont.)

515D, 158n
 515E, 46n, 156n
 515E-516A, 157n
 516A, 156n
 516A-B, 46n
 516B, 166n
 516E, 153n
 517A, 157n, 159n
 517B, 92n, 166n
 518C, 148n, 156n
 518C-D, 166n
 518D, 157n
 519A, 145n
 519B, 132n, 144n,
 148n, 156n
 519D, 159n
 520B-C, 91n
 520C, 159n
 521C, 157n
 521E, 168n
 522B, 168n
 523A, 101n
 527D, 156n
 529A-530C, 109n
 529B-530C, 110n
 532A-B, 92n
 532B, 101n
 533B, 158n
 533D, 132n, 145n,
 157n, 330n
 534A-B, 103n
 534D, 5n
 535E, 144n
 536A, 34n
 536E, 46n
 539E, 40n, 159n
 550B, 162n
 554C, 46n
 557D-E, 46n
 558D, 46n
 560B-C, 14n, 160n
 571C-D, 141n
 572B, 141n
 572C-E, 35n, 146n
 575C, 141n
 579A, 97n
 580E, 144n
 579B, 98n
 586A-B, 145n
 586C, 144n
 588B, 125n
 590C, 168n
 592A-B, 171n
 596B, 111n
 597A, 111n
 609A-B, 129n

<i>Respublica</i> (cont.)	609D, 130n 610E-611A, 130n 611A, 130n 611D, 117n 611E, 127n 614B, 168n 614C-D, 166n 614D, 149n 616A, 166n 617E, 170n 618B-C, 155n, 294n 619D, 167n 619E, 166n, 169n 620E, 47n 621B, 153n	<i>Theaetetus</i>	149A, 158n 152A, 138n 57E, 141n 58D, 141n 161B-162A, 324n 169E-171B, 139n 171B-C, 139n 173A, 162n 176A-B, 126n 176B, 166 176C, 93n, 139n, 143n 176E, 141n 176E-177A, 140n 186D, 103n 190A, 104n 197C-201D, 165n
<i>Sophist</i>	222E, 163n 228B-231B, 147n 230A, 143n 230B-D, 147n 230C-E, 158n 235B-C, 160n 244-45, 119n 245B, 92n 247B, 123n 248A, 98n, 101n 248E-249A, 110n 253B, 103n 254A, 132n 263E, 104n 265C, 104n 265C-E, 111n	<i>[Theages]</i>	121B-C, 161n
<i>Symposium</i>	196C, 46n 201D, 150n 202A, 103n 202E, 149n 203B-D, 151n 205E, 278n 207C, 152n 207E, 162n 208E-209B, 151n 210A-B, 152n 210C, 152n 210C-E, 153n 210D, 152n, 156n, 163n 210E, 153n 211A-C, 98n 211B-C, 102n 211C, 97n, 124n, 153n 212A, 166n 218A, 147n 219A, 132n	<i>Timaeus</i>	18C-D, 144n 22A, 173n 22C, 13n 28A, 101n, 103n 28B, 98n, 111n 28B-C, 129n 28C, 257n 29A, 111n 29E, 93n 30A, 110n 30B, 104n, 118n 34C, 111n 35A, 119n 36E-40D, 118 37A, 13n, 119n 37E-38A, 100n 39E, 99n, 113n, 137n 39E-40A, 111n 40C, 113 41, 112 41-42, 138n 41A, 105n, 112n 41A-D, 129n 41D, 105n, 112n, 130n, 161n, 203n 41D-E, 312n 41D-42A, 117n, 137n 41E, 134n 41E-42A, 169n 41E-42D, 168n 41E-42E, 137n 42B, 166n 42B-C, 168n

<i>Timaeus</i> (cont.)	42C-D, 97n 42D, 113n, 161n, 166n 42D-E, 117n 44C, 155n 46D, 108n 46D-49B, 114n 47A, 110n 47B, 127n 47D, 127n 47E, 113, 114n 48A, 116n 48D, 114n 48E-49A, 98n 49A, 115n 49C, 115n 49D, 115n 49D-50A, 173n 50B, 105n 50D, 114n 51A, 114n 51A-B, 115n 52A, 98n 52E, 115n 69C, 117n, 127n 70E, 125n 86B, 119n, 141n 86D-E, 143n, 144n 88B, 125n 90A, 163n 90E, 168n 91A-92C, 170n		<i>Symposium</i> (cont.)	2.17-21, 126n
Plutarch			Church Fathers	
<i>Moralia</i>	7.45-46, 154n		Ambrose	
Simplicius			<i>Death as a Good</i> (<i>Bon. Mort</i>)	5.20, 43n 6.22, 35n
<i>In Physics</i>	35.14, 103n 156.13, 96n, 103n, 110n 157.7, 103n 164.24, 96n, 103n, 110n 181.10-11, 192n 181.10-30, 191n 300.31, 103n		<i>The Soul</i> (Isaac)	3.8, 43n 6.52, 43n
Xenophon			Augustine	
<i>Memorabilia</i>	1.4.1-7, 108n 1.5.5, 155n 4.3.1-9, 108n		<i>Confessions</i>	7.9, 207n
<i>Symposium</i>	1.4, 156n		Clement of Alexandria	
			<i>Christ the Educator</i> (<i>Paedagogus</i>)	1.1, 308n
			<i>Miscellanies</i> (<i>Stromata</i>)	2.5, 211n 2.9, 273n 5.1, 272n 5.3, 303n 5.14, 91n, 92n, 161n 7.1, 47n 7.15, 324n
			Justin	
			<i>1st Apology</i>	5, 54n 12, 54n 13, 5n 20, 54n 46, 54n
			<i>2nd Apology</i>	8, 54n 10, 54n 13, 54n
			<i>Dialog with Trypho</i>	61, 54n
			Lactantius	
			<i>Epitome of the</i> <i>Divine Institutes</i>	5.50, 271n
			<i>The Divine</i> <i>Institutes</i>	3.22, 272n
			Origen	
			<i>Against Celsus</i>	1.29, 76n 6.1, 9n

<i>Against Celsus</i> (cont.)	6.1-2, 9n 6.2, 9n 6.4, 10n 6.10, 5n 6.16, 9n, 76n 6.16-17, 5n 6.19, 10n 7.18, 76n 7.58, 5n
<i>Exhortation to Martyrdom</i>	49, 308n
<i>Prayer (Or.)</i>	15.1-2, 31n 25.1, 8n 27.1-6, 8n